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Employee Turnover: The Effects of Workplace Events

by

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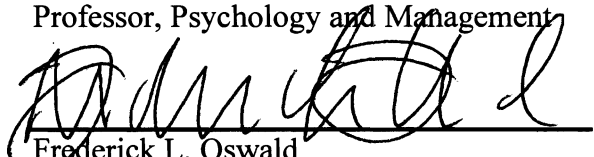
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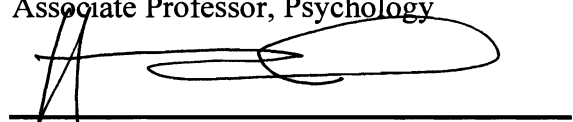
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ABSTRACT

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This research was designed to extend the unfolding model of voluntary turnover by examining the most commonly reported turnover decision path. Specifically, the purpose of the current investigation was to explore how employees evaluate negative workplace events—coined “shocks”—and the effects of such events on turnover intention.

Participants, 204 Registered Nurses currently employed by a hospital, were asked to report on a negative work event. Only satisfaction with the organization’s response to the event affected justice perceptions regarding the shock event. Events perceived as unjust or unfair were negatively related to perceived compatibility with the organization, which in turn predicted turnover intention. Job embeddedness also influenced perceived compatibility and intent to leave the organization. Characteristics of the shock events and suggestions to organizations to prevent avoidable, voluntary turnover are also presented.

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I began this graduate program just a few months after my Mom lost a terrible battle with cancer. There's no silver lining of such an experience but if I pressed to name one (very faint!), then it's that it put the stress and trials of graduate school in perspective. My mother's graduate program required countless 80 mile round-trip commutes and her dissertation involved numerous hours of interview transcription; I don't know how she successfully did this while raising three children. I'm amazed. I'll forever be sad that we did not have the chance to collaborate. I dedicate this dissertation to my Mom, Joy Janelle Stein Rittmayer, Ph.D.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Voluntary employee turnover refers to instances in which employees choose to leave the organization. It is particularly concerning to organizations because those employees who choose to leave often report that their decision was avoidable (Maertz & Campion, 1998) and that the organization could have done things to prevent them from leaving. Avoidable turnover is frequently initiated by specific workplace events and experiences that prompted thoughts of quitting (Holtom, Mitchell, & Inderrieden, 2005; Lee & Mitchell, 1994; Lee, Mitchell, Holtom, McDaniel, & Hill, 1999; Morrell, Loan-Clarke, & Wilkinson, 2004). Such events have been named *shocks* because they jar employees toward deliberate judgments about their jobs (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). Because work events are events that organizations may be able to monitor and manage, the focus of my dissertation research was the evaluation and effects of workplace shocks.

This research was conducted with a sample of registered nurses (RNs). The occupation of nursing was chosen because it is a stressful profession, severely troubled by high rates of job burnout and turnover (American Nurses Association, 2001). In 2006 the American Hospital Association reported a national RN vacancy rate of 8.5% and the current shortage of RNs in the U.S. is expected to grow significantly over the next 5 to 10 years to nearly one million nurses by 2014. Additionally, this sample is aligned with previous research on workplace shocks and voluntary turnover, which has been conducted with RNs (e.g., Lee, Mitchell, Wise, & Fireman, 1996; Morrell et al., 2004).

Over the past two decades, nurses have consistently reported workplace events, including the workload, leadership/management issues, professional conflicts, and

emotional demands of caring as the top sources of job stress (Gary-Toft & Anderson, 1981; McVicar, 2003; see also Lee et al., 1999; Morrell et al., 2004). Although much research has documented the sources of nurses' job stress, burnout, and turnover, little research has investigated how stressful shock events are evaluated or whether organizational responses to shocks affect nurses' work-related attitudes and behavior. Therefore, understanding the conditions under which workplace shocks do (or do not) lead to work withdrawal and turnover of nurses is not only of interest to basic researchers, but also to the healthcare and medical communities.

This study was designed to extend prior turnover research by assessing whether individual differences affect the impact of workplace shocks. I proposed, for example that two different employees may experience the *same* shock and have initial thoughts of leaving but evaluate the event differently. More specifically, I predicted that event-related evaluation and effects on employees' job-related attitudes, behaviors, and intentions depend, at least in part, on personality traits and job embeddedness. Job embeddedness refers to the extent that employees feel both connected to the organization and that they would sacrifice benefits if they left the organization (Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablinski, & Erez, 2001). For example, nurses have consistently reported excessive workload as a significant workplace shock (Lee et al., 1999; McVicar, 2003; Morrell et al., 2004). An excessive workload may cause some nurses to quit on-the-spot or search for a new job, yet other nurses may be as stressed by the amount of work but ultimately shrug-it-off and stay at the organization.

The present study advances previous turnover research by investigating employees' perceptions of how organizations handle the shocking events. Research has

shown that organizational actions can mitigate the effects of negative workplace events (e.g., Greenberg, 1990). A common way employees process, or evaluate, workplace events is by asking, “Was that fair?” (Colquitt, 2001). Perceptions of fairness, or justice, in the workplace are referred to as organizational justice. People assess the fairness of decision outcomes and events and the processes or circumstances surrounding them separately (Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001). Returning to the previous example, organizations could respond to nurses’ concerns regarding excessive workload in various ways: One response would be to ignore their complaints; an alternate response would be to investigate the concern and assign patient cases and duties in a more equitable manner. In this study, employees’ evaluation of the event and the organization’s response to the event was assessed in terms of perceived justice.

The criteria of interest in the study were work withdrawal behavior and turnover intention. Work withdrawal refers to behaviors employees perform to avoid work tasks (e.g., lateness, absence, not meeting deadlines, failing to attend meetings) while maintaining current organization membership (Hanisch & Hulin, 1990; 1991). Turnover intention includes thoughts and behaviors related to leaving a job, organization, or profession. Turnover intention is regarded as the best predictor of actual turnover (Tett & Meyer, 1993). Events perceived as unjust or unfair were expected to be positively related to work withdrawal and turnover intention. The overarching goal of the proposed research was to better understand how negative workplace events and experiences influence the turnover decision process.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Voluntary employee turnover is frequently initiated by specific workplace events and experiences—called *shocks*—that prompt thoughts of quitting and leaving the organization (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). This notion was first proposed in the unfolding model of voluntary employee turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 1994) and supported by subsequent research (e.g., Holtom, Mitchell, & Inderrieden, 2005; Lee & Mitchell, 1994, Lee et al., 1999; Morrell, Loan-Clarke, & Wilkinson, 2004). Thoughts of quitting have been shown to be closely related to turnover intention, the extent to which an employee intends to leave the organization ($\rho = .69$; Hom et al., 1992), and intent to turnover has been recognized as the best predictor of actual turnover ($\rho = .65$; Tett & Meyer, 1993). The purpose of this research was to build upon the unfolding model of voluntary turnover by examining how employees evaluate and react to workplace shocks. First, turnover theories and research are reviewed, followed by a more detailed discussion of the unfolding model of voluntary turnover. Next, image theory (Beach, 1998), a decision-making theory that the unfolding model is based on is described. Lastly, two constructs proposed to be critical to the evaluation of workplace shocks, perceived justice and job embeddedness, are presented.

Early Turnover Theories and Research

Employee turnover refers to the rate at which an organization loses and gains employees and is expressed as a ratio or percentage of employees who left (or must be replaced) in a given time period to the total number of employees. Organizations with high turnover lose relatively more employees within a given time-frame than do

organizations with low turnover. Although not all turnover is bad—for instance, poor performers are let-go and difficult employees leave—most turnover is costly. Turnover costs include those associated with recruiting, selecting, and training replacement employees and lost productivity while the positions are unfilled (Maertz & Campion, 1998; see also Holtom et al., 2005, for specific costs).

Organizations count both those employees who choose to leave the organization and those who are asked to leave as part of their turnover rates. The former is referred to as voluntary turnover, initiated by the employee; the latter is referred to as involuntary turnover, forced by the organization. Research on voluntary turnover has suggested that employees who decide to leave are typically dissatisfied (e.g., Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000; Mobley, Horner, & Hollingsworth, 1978; Porter & Steers, 1973) or have alternate job offers (e.g., Griffeth et al., 2000; Hom, Caranikas-Walker, & Prussia, 1992).

Voluntary turnover should be particularly concerning to organizations because those employees who choose to leave the organization often report that their decision to leave was avoidable (Maertz & Campion, 1998). That is, the employee often believes that the organization could have taken action to prevent him or her from leaving.

Predictors and Correlates of Voluntary Turnover

Early research on voluntary turnover focused on predictors and correlates of turnover (e.g., Brayfield & Crockett, 1955; March & Simon, 1958; Porter & Steers, 1973). Several categories of predictors were identified, including job attitudes, such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment, perceived employer obligations, perceived job alternatives, and non-work factors, such as family pressures (see Maertz & Campion, 1998 and Porter & Steers, 1973 for reviews of turnover antecedents). The

predictors can be classified as “push” or “pull” factors (Lee & Mitchell, 1994): Push factors are internal, psychological forces that influence decisions to leave the organization. The assumption is that these internal states *push* employees to thoughts of quitting. Dissatisfaction and low commitment are examples of push factors. Alternatively, pull factors are external circumstances that affect employees’ decisions to leave the organization. Forces external to the employee, such as the availability of jobs or encouragement of others to quit, initiate thoughts of leaving the organization—*pulling* him from his current job. Most theories of turnover include both push and pull factors (e.g., Lee & Mitchell, 1994; March & Simon, 1958; Steers & Mowday, 1981).

One of the earliest theories of voluntary turnover proposed that the decision to leave an organization is a function of *desirability* and *ease* of movement to another job or organization (March & Simon, 1958). Over time, desirability of movement has been assessed primarily as job satisfaction (a push factor; Lee & Mitchell, 1994), and ease of movement primarily as the number of perceived job alternatives (a pull factor; Lee & Mitchell, 1994). In general, the theory posits that individuals who are less satisfied with their jobs and perceive more acceptable job alternatives are most likely to leave their current organization. These two categories of predictors, job attitudes (e.g., job satisfaction) and perceived alternatives, are included in most models of voluntary turnover (Hulin, Roznowski, & Hachiya, 1985; Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablinski, & Erez, 2001; Mobley, Horner, & Hollingsworth, 1978; Steers & Mowday, 1981).

Job attitudes. Job satisfaction and organizational commitment are the two most-studied job attitudes related to turnover (Mitchell et al., 2001). Job satisfaction reflects the degree of pleasure an employee derives from his or her job (Muchinsky, 2006) and

has long been considered the primary determinant of voluntary turnover (Brayfield & Crockett, 1955; March & Simon, 1958; Porter & Steers, 1973). Theories of turnover have suggested, and empirical data have supported, that satisfied employees stay at their organizations, whereas dissatisfied employees leave their organizations. The relationship between satisfaction and turnover is reliable, but relatively small; true score correlations derived from meta-analysis have ranged from -.18 to -.28 (Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000; Hom, Caranikas-Walker, & Prussia, 1992; Steel & Ovalle, 1984; Tett & Meyer, 1993).

Organizational commitment reflects the degree to which an individual feels a sense of loyalty to his or her employer (Muchinsky, 2006). Three distinct kinds of organizational commitment have been identified (Meyer & Allen, 1991): (a) affective commitment, affective attachment to the organization; (b) continuance commitment, attachment to the organization due to perceived costs associated with leaving; and (c) normative commitment, attachment to the organization due to a feeling that one ought to be loyal (i.e., stay with) the organization. All three kinds of commitment are presumed to be negatively related to turnover; individuals who feel less attached to their employer are more likely to leave the organization. Most studies of the organizational commitment-turnover relationship have assessed affective commitment and found negative, small-to-medium relationships between the two constructs ($\rho = -.23$ to $-.38$; Griffeth et al., 2000; Steel & Ovalle, 1984; Tett & Meyer, 1993).

Perceived alternative jobs. Perceived alternative jobs refer to the availability, acceptability, and attainability of jobs outside an individual's present organization (Griffeth & Hom, 1988). As such, perceived alternatives have been assessed in terms of

number (i.e., availability), quality (i.e., acceptability), and certainty (i.e., attainability, the likelihood of receiving an offer for a given job; Maertz & Campion, 1998) of alternate jobs. Perceived alternative jobs are positively related to turnover, although the relationship is relatively weaker than job attitudes-turnover relationships. Meta-analyses have found small true score correlations between perceived availability of alternate jobs and turnover of .12 and .14 (Griffeth et al., 2000; Hom et al., 1992, respectively) and between acceptability of alternate jobs and turnover of .15 (Griffeth et al., 2000). One indicator of the availability of alternate jobs is the unemployment rate; during times of high unemployment, fewer alternate jobs exist. Interestingly, the unemployment rate also affects the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover. When unemployment is low, the satisfaction-turnover relationship is stronger compared to when unemployment is high (Carsten & Spector, 1987). Presumably, when few alternative jobs are available, employees may be dissatisfied and wish to quit their jobs but stay with the organization because they perceive few, if any, alternate jobs.

Process Models of Voluntary Turnover

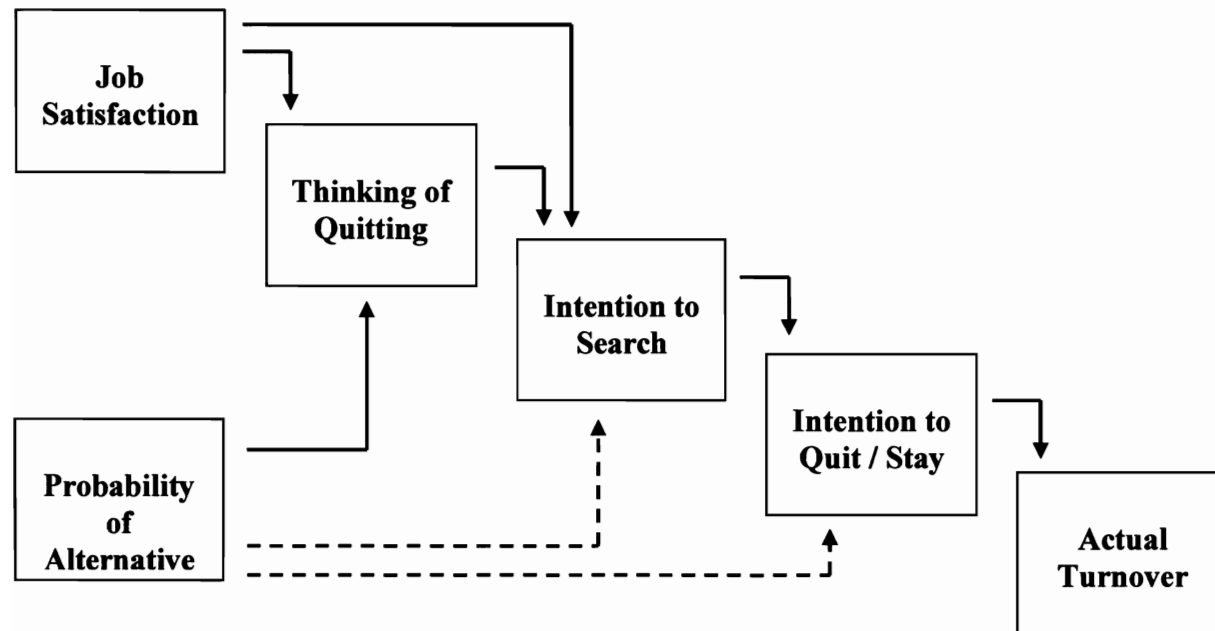
Having identified various antecedents of voluntary turnover, researchers shifted focus toward process models of turnover—that is, models that explain how the antecedents are related. The prototype of process models is Mobley's (1977) intermediate linkage model, which introduced the idea of turnover-related cognitions and intentions (Maertz & Campion, 1998). First, Mobley's (1977; Mobley et al., 1978) model of turnover is presented and then two other turnover models, which build on Mobley's (1977; Mobley et al., 1978) model, are reviewed: Steers and Mowday's (1981) model of employee turnover and Lee and Mitchell's (1994) unfolding model of voluntary turnover.

The unfolding model is discussed in greater detail in the next section because it is the framework for the proposed research.

Intermediate linkage model of employee turnover. Given the significant but small-to-moderate relationships between job satisfaction and actual turnover, Mobley (1977) proposed that dissatisfaction with one's job initiates thoughts of quitting and intentions to search for another job but is not directly related to turnover. Mobley (1977, Mobley et al., 1978) developed a theory of withdrawal that explained how dissatisfaction is related to the decision to leave. He suggested that the effect of satisfaction on turnover is indirect and operates through turnover-related cognitions and intentions. More specifically, according to the model, low job satisfaction elicits thoughts of quitting and intention to search, which lead to intention to quit or stay with the organization, and finally a decision to quit or stay (i.e., actual turnover). Additionally, Mobley and colleagues suggested that intention to search and intention to quit or stay were affected by perceived probability of finding an acceptable alternative job.

Mobley et al. (1978) tested their model with a sample of hospital employees. Participants completed measures of job satisfaction, perceived probability of finding an acceptable alternate job, intention to search, and intention to quit. Turnover data (i.e., voluntary termination or non-termination) was collected 47 weeks after the initial survey was conducted. Results of regression analyses supported Mobley's model (see Figure 1): Job satisfaction did not have a direct effect on turnover ($\beta = .01, ns$), rather satisfaction influenced thinking of quitting ($\beta = -.54, p < .01$) and intention to search ($\beta = -.25, p < .01$). Intention to search, in turn, was related to intentions to quit ($\beta = .56, p < .01$). In addition to job satisfaction, probability of finding an acceptable alternate job also

Figure 1. Adaptation of Mobley et al. (1978) employee turnover decision process.



Note. Supported paths indicated by → and predicted paths not supported by data indicated by --→.

predicted thoughts of quitting ($\beta = -.13, p < .05$); but contrary to the model, it was not related to intentions to search ($\beta = .05, ns$) or quit ($\beta = .05, ns$). Thoughts of quitting predicted intention to search ($\beta = .44, p < .01$), which in turn predicted intention to quit ($\beta = .56, p < .01$). Intention to quit was the sole, significant predictor of actual turnover ($\beta = .58, p < .01$). The main contribution of Mobley et al.'s (1978) model was the inclusion of turnover-related cognitions and intentions. Furthermore, this research introduced the idea that a turnover decision process exists, and that the decision to leave an organization is usually a deliberate one.

Meta-analyses of turnover research (e.g., Griffeth et al., 2000; Hom et al., 1992) have supported the Mobley et al. (1978) model of turnover. Hom et al. (1992) concluded that job satisfaction was a better predictor of thoughts of quitting ($\rho = -.60$), search intentions ($\rho = -.47$), and quit intentions ($\rho = -.49$) than of actual turnover ($\rho = -.18$). Furthermore, turnover-related cognitions and intentions were better predictors of turnover ($\rho = .26 - .36$) than was job satisfaction ($\rho = -.18$). Due to cross-sectional data, Hom et al. (1992) could not conclusively determine how various turnover cognitions (i.e., thoughts of quitting, search decisions, intentions to quit) were related. Nonetheless, the meta-analyses have confirmed a general framework of the turnover process that emphasizes the role of thoughts of quitting and intentions to leave in turnover decisions. To sum, the relationship between turnover intentions and actual turnover has been estimated to be quite strong, ρ ranging from .50 to .65 (Steel & Ovalle, 1994; Tett & Meyer, 1993).

Model of employee turnover. Steers and Mowday (1981) extended Mobley's (1977; Mobley et al., 1978) model by including employee expectations of job and non-work factors. Their model was comprised of three main linkages: (a) job expectations and

job attitudes, (b) job attitudes and intentions to leave, and (c) intentions to leave and actual turnover. According to Steers and Mowday's model, job expectations are the starting point of voluntary turnover. Job expectations refer to employees' beliefs regarding their jobs—"what they feel they must have, what they would like to have, and what they can do without" (Steers & Mowday, p. 243). The first part of the model proposed that job attitudes, such as job satisfaction and commitment, result from the interaction of employees' expectations and work experiences and events. For example, employees may have expectations regarding rewards for good performance, positive relations with supervisors and coworkers, and the kinds of tasks and responsibilities that comprise their jobs. Therefore, if an employee has an unsupportive supervisor then his or her expectation of positive relationships at work is not met. Unmet expectations are related to low job satisfaction and commitment, whereas met expectations are related to high job satisfaction and commitment. The second part of the model proposed that satisfaction and commitment are negatively related to intentions to leave. Additionally, the relationship between job attitudes and intentions to leave was predicted to depend on non-work factors, including the employee's perceptions of the unemployment rate, where he or she lives, and the amount of time he or she has to spend with family or enjoy recreational activities. Lastly, the third part of model proposed that intent to leave is positively related to actual turnover. The extent to which turnover intentions are related to actual turnover was predicted to be influenced by employees' assessment of external factors such as availability of alternative jobs.

Lee and Mowday (1987) tested Steers and Mowday's model with a sample of 445 employees of a financial institution. Their results generally supported the model:

Employees' job expectations, values, and organizational experiences (e.g., race relations, employee participation, and compensation equity) were predictive of job-related attitudes, including job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and job involvement. All three job attitudes were negatively correlated with intent to leave (r 's ranged from -.22 to -.44), which was positively related to leaving ($r = .24$). However, contrary to the model, non-work factors did not interact with job attitudes to predict intent to leave. That is, family life, recreational activities, and other non-work factors did not affect the relationships between job satisfaction, commitment, or job involvement and intent to leave. Moreover, non-work factors were not significantly related to intent to leave ($r = .01$) but alternative job opportunities were significantly related to intent to leave ($r = .16$).

Lee and Mowday's (1987) research generally supported Steers and Mowday's (1981) model, thereby advancing understanding of the turnover process. Lee and Mowday found that job expectations and values, defined as the extent to which the organization's standards and procedures were consistent with employees' personal and professional values, are predictive of turnover intentions and actual turnover. The unfolding model of voluntary turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 1994) extends this research by introducing the idea that specific events spur initial thoughts of leaving the organization.

The Unfolding Model of Voluntary Turnover

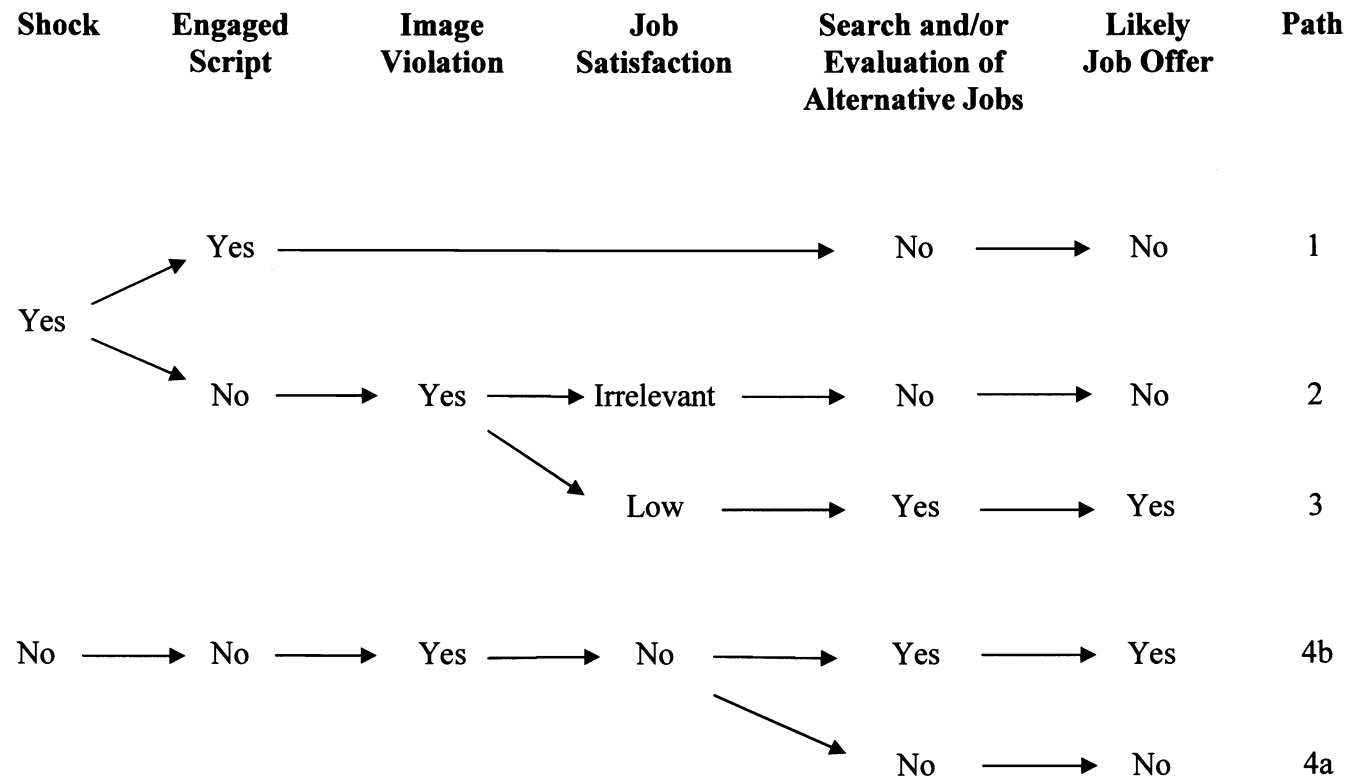
The unfolding model of voluntary turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 1994; Lee et al., 1999) emphasizes that specific experiences and events initiate the turnover decision process. The model was developed to explain both *why* and *how* people leave organizations. It posits that thoughts of quitting originate in response to specific events—"shocks to the system" (Lee, Mitchell, Wise, & Fireman, 1996, p. 6)—rather than general

dissatisfaction. Additionally, the unfolding model proposes that there are multiple ways, or decision paths, by which individuals leave organizations (see Figure 2).

The Decision Paths

Lee and Mitchell and colleagues (Lee & Mitchell, 1994; Lee et al., 1999; Lee et al., 1996) outlined four paths to turnover decisions that were developed from interview, empirical, and anecdotal data. These paths differ in the amount of decision-related deliberation: In response to a specific shock, some individuals quit impulsively whereas others merely contemplate whether they should stay or go. Three of the four decision paths originate with a *shock*, “a very distinguishable event that *jars* employees to toward deliberate judgments about their jobs... that involve the prospect of leaving the job” (Lee & Mitchell, 1994, p. 60). In some instances, the shock triggers a script, an existing plan to leave the organization in response to the event; this is Path 1 of the model (see Figure 2, Path 1). For example, some employees may have scripts that dictate leaving the organization if they receive offers for better jobs or are denied promotions. In other instances, experiencing a shock does not enact a scripted response, but rather an evaluation of how well one’s values, goals, and plans fit with the organization (see Figure 2, Paths 2 and 3). Paths 2 and 3 include this evaluation of compatibility with the organization. Lee and Mitchell use image theory (Beach, 1990; see also, Beach & Mitchell, 1998), a decision-making theory, to propose that employees compare their values, goals, and goal-related plans to those of the current organization. (Image theory and its components are discussed in detail in the next section of the literature review.) To the extent they perceive their values, goals, or plans as incompatible with the organization, employees experience an image violation. Image violation is proposed to be

Figure 2. Adaptation of Lee and Mitchell's (1994; Lee et al., 1999) unfolding model of voluntary turnover.



negatively related to job satisfaction and positively related to turnover. Paths 2 and 3 differ in terms of alternate job search and evaluation; Path 2 describes leaving without searching for another job, whereas Path 3 includes alternate job search and belief that a job offer is likely.

The fourth path, in line with other turnover models and theories, explains that people leave because they are dissatisfied (see Figure 2, Paths 4a and 4b). For these employees, a specific event does not precede thoughts of quitting—that is, the turnover process is not initiated by a shock but rather by low job satisfaction. Lee et al. (1999) concluded that a turnover decision stemming from low job satisfaction could be reached with (Path 4b) or without (Path 4a) searching for and evaluation alternate jobs.

To date, research regarding the unfolding model has primarily assessed whether voluntary *leavers* can be classified into one of these four paths. Across several studies, the ability to be classified into one of these four paths ranges from approximately 60% to 90% (e.g., Donnelly & Quirin, 2006; Lee et al., 1996; Lee et al., 1999; Morrell et al., 2008). The majority of voluntary leavers have been classified into Path 3, comprised of shock, image violation, low job satisfaction, and search/evaluation of alternative jobs (Holtom et al., 2005; Lee et al., 1999). Reliable classification rates (i.e., the finding that most voluntary leavers recall experiencing all three of the psychological and behavioral responses) suggest that these factors do play a role in turnover processes and decisions. However, previous research has assessed only whether or not the leaver experienced each decision path component. The impact or influence of shocks, scripts, image violation, job satisfaction, and alternate job search behavior on turnover has not been examined beyond its presence or absence (Morrell, Loan-Clarke, Arnold, & Wilkinson, 2008).

Shock Events

The other contribution of the unfolding model of voluntary turnover is the inclusion of events and experiences—coined *shocks*—that trigger thoughts of quitting. To date, information about shocks has been obtained by interviewing or surveying people who have voluntarily left their organizations within the past 12 months (Donnelly & Quirin, 2006; Lee et al., 1999; Lee et al., 1996; Morrell et al., 2008; Morrell et al., 2004). Voluntary leavers have been asked, “Was there a single particular event that caused you to think about leaving?” Several studies have documented that the majority of voluntary leavers experienced some type of shock (Lee et al., 1996; 1999; Morrell et al., 2004; 2008). To assess the experienced shock, participants have been asked: “Please describe the event,” “Was the event expected or unexpected?” “Would you characterize the event as positive or negative, or neutral?” and “Did the event involve personal issues or work issues?” Reported shocks have varied greatly and include expected and unexpected, positive and negative, and personal and work-related events and experiences (Lee et al., 1996). An unsolicited job offer, a fight with one’s boss or coworker, a partner’s employment transfer, and expecting a child are all examples of reported shocks. Holtom et al. (2005) analyzed data from 412 voluntary leavers and concluded that experienced shocks were about equally likely to be positive (44%) or negative (48%) (In terms of affective reaction) and personal (52%) or work-related (48%), but the majority of reported shocks was unexpected (80%) rather than expected (20%). To better understand what kinds of events are shocks, Morrell et al. (2004) conducted a cluster analysis of shocks reported by a sample of 156 voluntary leavers. The analysis revealed two categories of shocks: One cluster represented personal shocks, which tended to be

Images

According to image theory, decisions are driven by the degree to which the outcomes of various decision options are compatible with the decision maker's *images*. Images are schematic knowledge structures that organize thinking about decisions. Decision makers possess three distinct kinds of images: (a) *value images*, (b) *trajectory images*, and (c) *strategic images*. *Value images* consist of the decision maker's principles and beliefs regarding "how things *should* be and how people *ought* to behave" (Beach & Mitchell, 1998, p. 9). People's values determine their goals, which comprise trajectory images. *Trajectory images* represent decision makers' goal agenda, their vision of the ideal future including what they will become or achieve. Lastly, *strategic images* refer to plans that have been adopted to achieve goals. Plans include concrete, goal-directed behaviors and forecasts of what will happen if the behaviors are performed. Decision makers approach the decision with a unique decision frame, comprised of their decision-relevant images (referred to as *working images*) as well as knowledge of the situation. Individuals have *working images* for different life domains, including work, family, recreation, and spirituality. These images vary in clarity, the degree to which they can be articulated, and strength, the degree to which they are held.

Image Compatibility and Decisions

Image theory proposes that decisions are based on fit or compatibility. Faced with a decision, individuals conduct a *compatibility test* to determine the degree to which attributes of options are aligned with their images and choose the option that is most compatible. Image theory explains two kinds of decisions, adoption decisions and progress decisions. Adoption decisions refer to screening options and selecting the best

expected and positive events; the other cluster represented work-related shocks, which tended to be unexpected and negative events.

Holtom et al. (2005) and Morrell et al. (2004) assessed whether certain kinds of shocks were associated with specific decision paths. They found that expected personal shocks were associated with unavoidable decisions to quit. For example, when a nurse learned she was pregnant or her partner's job was being relocated, there was nothing her employer could do to convince her to stay at the organization. Individuals who quit jobs in response to personal shocks typically followed Path 1 of the unfolding model (Holtom et al., 2005; Morrell et al., 2004). These individuals engaged *scripts*, pre-existing plans of action that specified leaving in response to the event. When these events happened, there was no decision process because the decision was made in advance of the event. In response to personal shocks, turnover decisions were fairly automatic.

Alternatively, less expected work-related shocks were associated with avoidable quit decisions (Holtom et al., 2005; Morrell et al., 2004). For example, nurses who experienced conflicts with their supervisors or did not receive pay raises felt the organization could have taken some action that would have prevented them from leaving (Morrell et al., 2004). Contrary to the experience of personal shocks, the majority of individuals who reported workplace shocks did not report enacting scripts. Rather, they expressed that their values, goals, and plans were not compatible with those of the organization, that they were dissatisfied with their jobs, and that they ultimately decided to leave their organizations (Paths 2 and 3 of the unfolding model; Holtom et al., 2005; Lee et al., 1999; Morrell et al., 2008). In response to workplace shocks, turnover decisions were more deliberate. To review, expected personal shocks have been

one. Options that are not compatible with one's working images are disregarded; the chosen option is the one that is consistent with one's values, fulfills one's goals, or allows one to implement goal-relevant plans. An example adoption decision is accepting a job offer. Assume individuals receive two job offers; they must choose one of them. They consider the workload and environment, salary and benefits, and opportunities for training and advancement associated with each job and compare these attributes to their ideal *images*. They choose the job (and/or organization) that they perceive to be most compatible with their values, goals, and plans.

Progress decisions refer to decisions between continuing with the current "option" versus choosing an alternate option. Progress decisions involve assessing the compatibility of the forecasted future associated with the current option and the ideal future implied by one's images (Beach & Mitchell, 1998). Image compatibility is associated with continuation and commitment (Dunegan, 1998). If the current option's likely outcome does not match one's ideal outcome, then it is abandoned in favor of another option. An example of a progress decision is the decision to quit a job. Contemplating leaving an organization, employees compare their images to the current organizations, their forecasted futures at these organizations, and/or their ideal organizations or futures. If they determine that their values, goals, or plans are not compatible with those of the options, then they will experience an *image violation*. Image violation, in turn, results in a decision to quit (i.e., choose another organization or no job over the current organization and job; Lee et al., 1999).

Lee and Mitchell (1994) purport to use image theory as the basis of the unfolding model of voluntary turnover to explain how individuals decide to quit. However, it is not

associated with unavoidable, automatic decisions to quit via the enactment of scripts, whereas less expected work-related shocks have been associated with avoidable, calculated decisions to quit. Much research has shown that shocks are associated with thoughts of leaving the organization and turnover decisions (e.g., Donnelly & Quirin, 2006; Lee et al., 1999; Lee et al., 1996; Morrell et al., 2008).

Yet, researchers have called for a better understanding of the kinds of events that precede decisions to quit (e.g., Lee & Mitchell, 1994; Maertz & Campion, 1998; Morrell et al., 2008). To date, the content of reported shocks has not been explored beyond classification as a personal or work-related shock. What is known about work-related shocks is that they vary greatly, ranging from pay and promotion issues, to relationships at work, to assigned tasks and duties (e.g., Holtom et al., 2005; Lee et al., 1999; Porter & Steers, 1973), and are more typically associated with drawn-out and deliberate, rather than impulsive, decisions to quit (see Figure 2, Path 3 of the unfolding model; Holtom et al., 2005; Lee et al., 1999; Morrell et al., 2008).

Because *shocking* work-related events and experiences are associated with avoidable turnover decisions and are events that organizations may be more able to monitor and manage, the current study was limited to work-related shocks. More specifically, I examine only negative workplace events and experiences because almost all reported work-related shocks have been negative events or experiences (i.e., events that elicit negative emotions; Lee et al., 1999; Morrell et al., 2004). Yet, it seems likely that not all workplace shocks are equally distressing; for example, being denied a promotion or pay raise is presumably much more upsetting than an argument with a coworker. A workplace shock experience was assessed in terms of severity, frequency,

clear how image theory informs the turnover decision paths proposed by the unfolding model. A model based on image theory would propose that individuals use images to guide decision-making after shocking personal and work-related events. In particular, in response to shocks, individuals might consider whether situation-relevant information, such as the circumstances and consequences surrounding shocks, is consistent and compatible with their images. The individual would conduct a compatibility test, comparing his future at the current organization to his ideal future. For instance, suppose an account manager is denied a promotion. It is reasonable to presume that the account manager has thoughts of quitting the organization—being denied a promotion is a *shock*. If his trajectory image (i.e., goal) is becoming an account executive this year, then he is likely to perceive an image violation. As mentioned, image violation (i.e., lack of compatibility) is presumed to be positively related to turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 1994; Lee et al., 1999).

To sum, the application of image theory to the study of employee turnover first assumes that people have images regarding their work or job. For example, at work, people value being fairly compensated, having a supportive manager, and performing meaningful tasks (value images). Additionally, they have specific goals, such as being promoted or meeting a difficult deadline, that direct and motivate their behavior (trajectory images). Lastly, they have ideas and plans regarding effective behavior to attain their goals (strategic images). Second, image theory assumes that employees rely on these images to make work-related decisions, including decisions regarding whether they should stay at or leave the organization. To the extent that people perceive their values, goals, or plans as compatible with the organization, they are likely to stay at the

and perceived justice (i.e., the extent to which the event was perceived as unjust or unfair) and was expected to be related to image violation and organizational withdrawal.

Image Theory

Image theory is based on how decisions *are actually* made (i.e., observed decision behavior), which can be contrasted with traditional decision-making theories that advise individuals of how decisions *should* be made (Beach & Mitchell, 1998). Traditional decision theories propose that decisions should be based on expected value (EV) or expected utility (EU). According to EV and EU theories, decision-making is driven by maximization; the decision maker chooses the option that maximizes profit (or benefits) and minimizes risk (or costs)—that is, the option with the greatest expected value or utility.

Although traditional decision-making theories describe how individuals should make decisions, they seldom describe how individuals actually make decisions (Beach & Mitchell, 1998). Traditional EV and EU decision strategies require a significant amount of time and effort and seem formal (i.e., calculating subjective expected utility requires great concentration, time, and effort and seems “too intellectually cold”; Beach & Mitchell, 1998, p. 7), especially for important life decisions. Instead, people prefer simple, easy decision strategies and are often “guided” by intuition (Beach & Mitchell, 1998). Given empirical findings counter to traditional theories, Beach and colleagues proposed that decisions are largely influenced by decision makers’ beliefs, goals, and plans. According to image theory, *fit*—between decision makers’ goals and plans and the outcomes of decision options—drives decision-making, not maximization (i.e., choosing the option with the highest expected value or utility).

organization; however, to the extent that their images are incompatible with the organization, they are likely to leave. In the current study, I explore the relationships between perceived justice and image compatibility and image compatibility and turnover intention. In particular, I was interested in the extent to which perceptions of the shock experience (particularly, the perceived justice of the shock) was related to image compatibility, and I proposed that this relationship depended on an employee's level of job embeddedness.

Job Embeddedness

Job embeddedness (Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablinski, & Erez, 2001) reflects an employee's relationship with the organization and potentially influences the interpretation of workplace shocks. Contrary to most theories of voluntary turnover, which explain why people leave organizations, job embeddedness explains why people stay at organizations. Embeddedness can be assessed in relation to the organization, on-the-job embeddedness, or the community, off-the-job embeddedness. More specifically, Mitchell et al. (2001) proposed that employees remain with their organizations to the extent they (a) *fit* with their organizations and communities, (b) have *links* to other people or activities in their organizations and communities, and (c) would experience *sacrifices* (i.e., psychological or fiscal costs) if they left their organizations and communities. Together these factors have been labeled job embeddedness. Job embeddedness represents an accumulation of resources, as links with others and fit develop over time and possible sacrifices grow with tenure (Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2008).

Mitchell et al. (2001) described two factors of job embeddedness, organization-related embeddedness and community-related embeddedness. Organization-related

embeddedness, also referred to as on-the-job embeddedness, reflects fit, links, and sacrifices related to one's organization. High on-the-job embeddedness stems from fitting with the organizational culture, having good relationships with coworkers, and perceiving great sacrifices (e.g., loss of benefits, compensation, and job security) associated with leaving the organization. Community-related embeddedness, also referred to as off-the-job embeddedness, reflects fit, links, and sacrifices related to one's community. High off-the-job embeddedness stems from liking and appreciating your community, feeling invested in your community, and perceiving losses associated with leaving the community (e.g., giving up a safe neighborhood or respect in the community).

Job embeddedness represents an extensive set of influences on an employee's decision to stay (Holtom, Mitchell, & Lee, 2006). Mitchell et al. (2001) pointed out that job embeddedness is different from affective commitment and job satisfaction because it is a "relatively nonaffective judgment" (p. 1106) about fit and links rather than a measure of emotional attachment or liking of one's job. Nonetheless, job embeddedness is highly correlated with both organizational commitment (r 's have ranged from .43 to .57; Crossley, Bennett, Jex, & Burnfield, 2007; Mitchell et al., 2001) and job satisfaction (r 's have ranged from .44 to .54; Crossley et al., 2007; Mitchell et al., 2001).

Embeddedness is positively related to employee retention (Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2008; Holtom & Inderrieden, 2006; Mitchell et al., 2001) because embedded employees are more complexly connected to the organization in terms of fit, links, and perceived sacrifices (Holtom et al., 2006). In particular, job embeddedness is negatively related to job search behavior (r 's = -.24 and -.29; Mitchell et al., 2001), intentions to leave (r 's ranged from -.41 to -.47; Crossley et al., 2007; Mitchell et al., 2001), and

voluntary turnover (correlations ranged from $-.11$ to $-.25$; Crossley et al., 2007; Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2008; Mitchell et al., 2001). When job satisfaction and organizational commitment are statistically controlled, off-the-job embeddedness predicts voluntary turnover (exponentiated b /odds ratio = $.60$, $p < .01$) but on-the-job embeddedness does not (exponentiated b /odds ratio = $.80$, ns ; Lee, Mitchell, Sablinski, Burton, & Holtom, 2004). Individuals with low off-the-job embeddedness were significantly more likely to turnover than individuals with high off-the-job embeddedness. However, Halbesleben and Wheeler conducted a usefulness analysis—a statistical procedure that controls for common variance among constructs—and found on-the-job embeddedness predicted turnover above and beyond job satisfaction and commitment.

In an attempt to integrate job embeddedness with the unfolding model of voluntary turnover, Holtom and Inderrieden (2006) investigated job embeddedness and the experience of shocks among voluntary leavers. They hypothesized that embeddedness would be greater among leavers who experienced a shock than leavers who did not. Their rationale was that if an embedded employee quits, then something *shocking* must have happened. Holtom and Inderrieden conducted a longitudinal study in which job embeddedness was assessed at Time 1 and voluntary turnover was assessed four years later at Time 2. They found that *shocked* leavers had reported previously significantly higher levels of job embeddedness than *non-shocked* leavers. Presumably, less embedded employees quit due to general dissatisfaction, whereas more embedded employees quit due to a specific event. Interestingly, job embeddedness was higher among employee participants who remained with the organization (i.e., stayers) than both shocked and

non-shocked leavers, supporting that job embeddedness is positively related to employee retention. Holtom and Inderrieden (2006) did not assess whether stayers experienced the same shocking events that leavers did. Perhaps stayers did experience the same or similar shocks, but due to their high levels of job embeddedness were less negatively affected by the shocks. This notion was tested recently by Burton and colleagues (Burton, Holtom, Sablinski, Mitchell, & Lee, 2010).

Burton et al. (2010) proposed that job embeddedness buffered the effects of negative shocks. More specifically, they hypothesized that job embeddedness moderated the relationship between a negative shock experience and job performance. They found that of employees who reported having experienced a negative workplace shock, those with high levels of job embeddedness had better job performance and performed more organizational citizenship behaviors (job performance and OCB ratings were provided by supervisors) compared to those with low levels of job embeddedness. Burton et al. did not investigate the mechanism for the job embeddedness moderator effect but suggested that the justice perceptions of highly embedded employees' may be resistant to change. That is, highly embedded employees formed justice perceptions regarding the organization early in their relationship with the organization and hold preconceived perceptions of justice (i.e., expect fairness in the workplace) that are not challenged by shocks.

In this study, the role of job embeddedness as a buffer against the negative effects of experienced shocks was explored further. Additionally, justice perceptions regarding a negative workplace shock experience were examined. Contrary to Burton et al. (2010), job embeddedness was not expected to be related to greater perceived justice but rather to

moderate the proposed relationship between justice perceptions regarding the shock and image compatibility. In other words, highly embedded employees were expected to perceive shock events as unfair (as would less embedded employees) but due to their high embeddedness perceptions of injustice were expected to be related to marginally less image compatibility, whereas less embedded employees would report significantly lower image compatibility.

Perceived Justice

The work environment, even a single work day, consists of different situations and events (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993; Kell, Rittmayer, Crook, & Motowidlo, 2010; Tett & Burnett, 2003). In response to workplace events, employees typically ask, “Was that fair?” (Colquitt, 2001). Perceptions of fairness, or justice, in the workplace are referred to as organizational justice. Individuals usually assess the fairness of both event or decision outcomes (e.g., not receiving a pay raise) and event or decision circumstances. Researchers have identified several types of organizational justice:

Distributive justice refers to the extent to which event or decision outcomes are perceived as fair. To assess distributive justice, individuals consider whether the outcomes match or are appropriate given their input (e.g., effort; Colquitt, 2001). For example, if employees learn they did not receive a promotion, then they think about whether the outcomes (i.e., no promotion) were fair given their job performance. *Procedural justice* refers to the extent to which the circumstances surrounding the event or decision processes are perceived as fair. To assess procedural justice, individuals evaluate whether the circumstances or processes are ethical, based on accurate information, and consistent across situations (Colquitt, 2001). For example, denied a promotion, employees may

consider what information the decision was based upon or whether the same person made all promotion decisions.

Organizational justice also includes assessment of the quality of interpersonal interactions related to the decision or event. These perceptions are referred to as *interactional justice*, the extent to which the interaction is perceived as fair and just. Interactional justice is comprised of two, more specific types of justice, *interpersonal justice* and *informational justice* (Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001). Interpersonal justice refers to sensitivity, the degree to which individuals perceive being treated with respect by others responsible for the event or decision. Informational justice refers to the explanation, the degree to which individuals perceive information regarding the procedure or outcome as reasonable and thorough (Colquitt, 2001).

Perceptions of organizational justice are important to organizations because perceived injustices have real consequences (Greenberg, 1990). For example, Jones and Skarlicki (2003) found that low distributive justice was associated with greater likelihood of voluntary turnover. This negative relationship was stronger when interactional justice was low. That is, when employees thought they were not paid fairly *and* not treated with respect, they were most likely to voluntarily leave the organization. Perceptions of injustice have also been associated with increased withdrawal and counterproductive behaviors ($\rho = -.50$ for distributive justice, $\rho = -.46$ for procedural justice, and $\rho = -.24$ for informational justice; Colquitt et al., 2001). Alternatively, employees who report that their management makes well-informed decisions (i.e., high procedural justice) and feel they are treated with kindness have reported greater intent to remain with the organization (Simons & Roberson, 2003). Perceived justice also has been associated with

greater job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and trust in the organization (Aryee, Budhwar, & Chen, 2002; Brashear, Manolis, & Brooks, 2005; Colquitt et al., 2001; Simons & Roberson, 2003). These important job attitudes have been shown to mediate the relationship between perceived justice and turnover intentions.

In the current investigation, I evaluated workplace shocks in terms of justice (i.e., Was the decision just? Was the decision process appropriate? Was I treated fairly by others?). I anticipated that perceived injustice would explain why work-related shocks have been associated with low image compatibility, an awareness that one's values, goals, or career plans are not compatible one's current organization (Holtom et al., 2005; Lee et al., 1999; Morrell et al., 2008). Additionally, as mentioned in the previous section, this relationship was expected to be moderated by job embeddedness.

CHAPTER 3

THE CURRENT INVESTIGATION

The purpose of the current investigation was to explore how employees evaluate a workplace shock as well as possible negative effects of a workplace shock experience. In previous research, shocks have only been assessed among voluntary leavers, who were asked if a single, specific event initiated thoughts of leaving the organization (Donnelly & Quirin, 2006; Lee et al., 1996; 1999; Morrell et al., 2004; 2008). However, to understand the conditions under which shocks lead (or do not lead) to thoughts about leaving the organization or withdrawal from work, shock experiences should be examined among employed individuals (Lee et al., 1996).

A sample of registered nurses currently employed by hospitals was recruited to participate in this study. Because employed individuals participated in the study, I was interested in examining work withdrawal behaviors and turnover intentions. Work withdrawal behaviors refer to behaviors employees perform to avoid work tasks. Turnover intentions refer to thoughts and behaviors (e.g., searching for an alternate job) related to leaving the organization. Because turnover is a low base-rate phenomenon and particularly infrequent during times of high unemployment (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009), work withdrawal and particularly intent to turnover (the extent to which employees anticipate leaving the organization) may be a better criteria than actual turnover to the extent that both reflect desire to leave the organization regardless of the state of the job market.

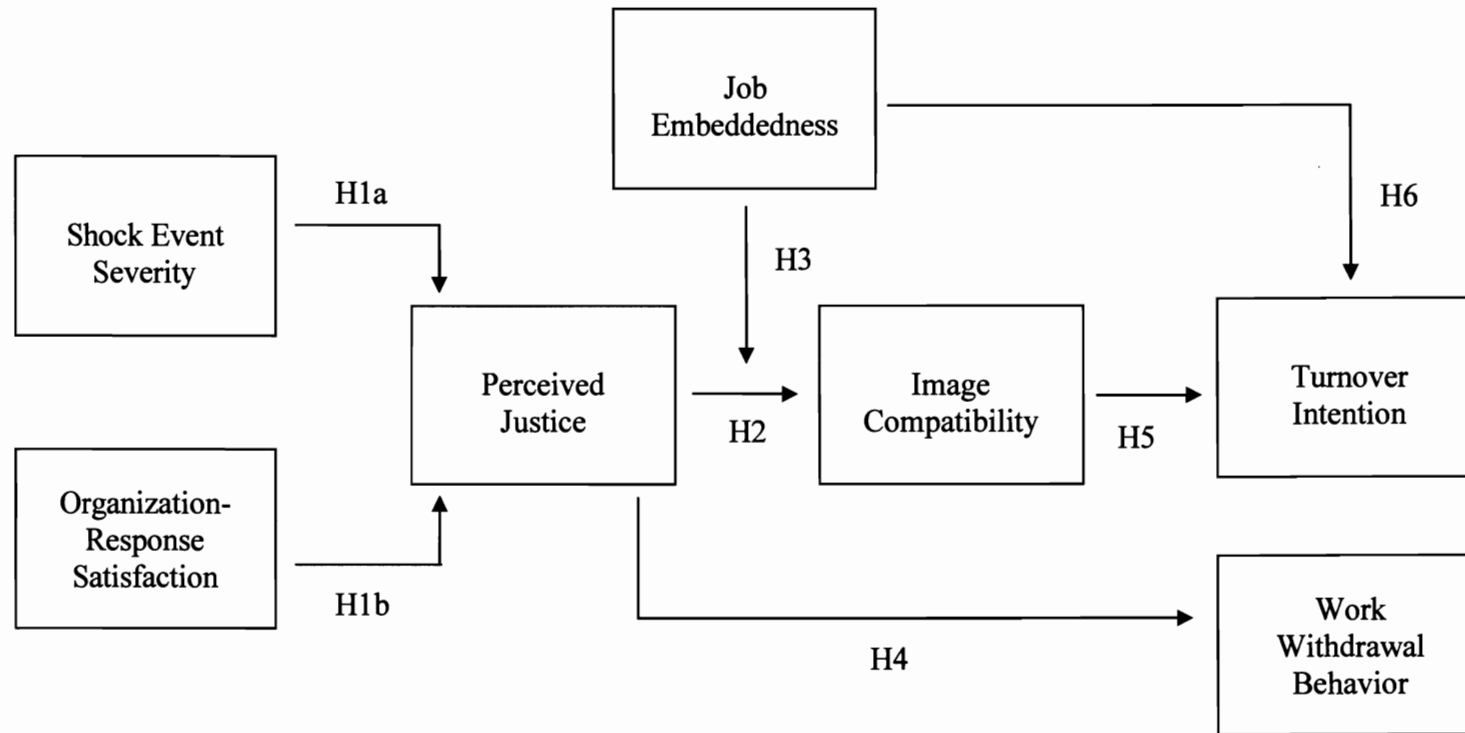
The current study builds upon the unfolding model of voluntary turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). The path reportedly taken by most leavers is characterized by the

experience of a shock, image violation, and a deliberate decision to leave the organization (see Figure 2, Path 3; Lee et al., 1999). More specifically, the current study expands this path by including an examination of employees' evaluation of workplace shocks. In particular, I assessed the shock experience in terms of perceived justice (i.e., the extent to which it was viewed as just or fair). The current investigation also advances the voluntary turnover literature by assessing organizations' responses to the shock events. The notion was that how an organization (or supervisor) handles a shock event (e.g., explains the circumstances to the employee, ignores the event, takes action to improve the situation or outcome, works to prevent the event from happening again) is part of an employee's evaluation of the event. That is, how fair or unfair a shock is perceived to be is determined, in part, by the organization's response to the shock. Additionally, I expected that the negative effects of workplace shocks (e.g., less image compatibility, greater work withdrawal, greater intent to turnover) would be moderated by job embeddedness and individual differences (e.g., emotional stability, conscientiousness). Thus, this study also attempted to position job embeddedness within the unfolding model of turnover.

Model of the Effects of a Workplace Shock Experience and Hypotheses

For the current study, I developed and tested a model of the evaluation of a workplace shock experience, including the organization's response to the shock event, and the effects of the shock. In particular, I examined how the shock evaluation relates to image compatibility, work withdrawal behaviors, and turnover intentions. In keeping with previous unfolding model research (e.g., Lee et al., 1996; 1999), the focus of this study was a single shock experience. The model is presented in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Proposed model of the evaluation and effects of a workplace shock experience.



The model originates with the shock event and organization response. The severity (i.e., extent to which it was upsetting, expected, avoidable) and frequency of the shock event were assessed, as well as the extent to which the organization's response was satisfying to the employee. I expected the severity of the shock event and organization response satisfaction to be associated with perceived justice because, based on organizational justice research, it is known that employees evaluate the fairness of workplace events and decisions *and* the circumstances surrounding events or decisions. Additionally, I expected more severe shocks to be related to less perceived justice, whereas I expected greater satisfaction with the organization responses to be related to greater perceived justice.

H1a: Shock event severity will be negatively related to perceived justice.

H1b: Organization response satisfaction will be positively related to perceived justice.

As shown in Figure 3, I hypothesized that perceived justice would be positively related to image compatibility. I expected employees who perceived shock experiences to be fair to report greater image compatibility (i.e., perceive their values, goals, and plans as compatible with those of the organization).

H2: Perceived justice will be positively related to image compatibility.

However, I hypothesized further that the relationship between perceived justice and image compatibility would be moderated by job embeddedness. The interpretation of shocks depends on "the social and cognitive context that surrounds the shock experience" (Holtom & Inderrieden, 2006, p. 439). Job embeddedness reflects employees' connections to the organization and therefore I anticipated that it would affect how

employees react to shocks. More specifically, job embeddedness was predicted to act as a *shock absorber*, buffering employees from the negative effects of shocks. Having experienced a workplace shock, highly-embedded employees may be less impacted by the shock compared to less-embedded employees. That is, perceptions of unfairness are more likely to result in lower image compatibility (i.e., an image violation, perceiving values, goals, and plans as incompatible with the organization) for less-embedded employees than highly-embedded employees (see Figure 4).

H3: The relationship between perceived justice and image compatibility will depend on job embeddedness; the relationship will be stronger when job embeddedness is low and weaker when job embeddedness is high.

Unlike previous voluntary turnover research concerning image compatibility, this study examined employees' job-related attitudes and intentions preceding decisions to quit. Therefore, I assessed the extent to which employees' shock experience and job attitudes were associated with work withdrawal and turnover intention. I predicted that perceived justice would be negatively related to work withdrawal behaviors. When employees perceive decisions and events in the organization as being unfair they are more likely to perform deviant behaviors (e.g., attending to personal matters at work, repeating a rumor or gossip about the company, calling in sick when you are not; Ambrose & Schminke, 2009). Therefore, to the extent that employees perceived the shock experience as more unjust, I expected that they would report greater withdrawal behavior.

H4: Perceived justice will be negatively related to work withdrawal.

I predicted that image compatibility would be negatively related to turnover intentions. According to image theory (Beach & Mitchell, 1998), when image compatibility is low, people should forgo the current option in favor of another option that is more aligned with their values, goals, and plans (e.g., choosing another organization). In relation to the current study, to the extent that employees perceived their values, goals, or plans as less compatible with those of the organization, they were expected to report greater intention to leave the organization.

H5: Image compatibility will be positively related to turnover intention.

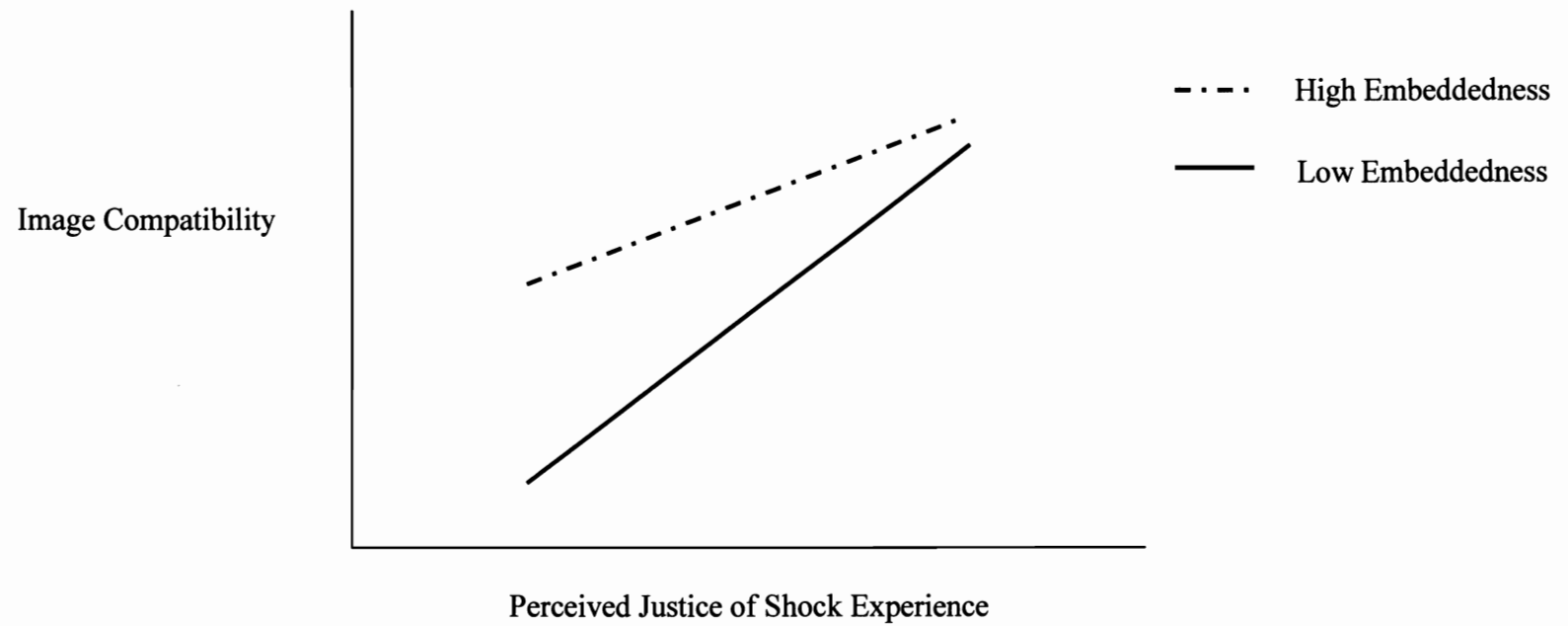
Lastly, I also expected that job embeddedness would be negatively related to turnover intention. Job embeddedness has been shown to be important for employee retention. Specifically, I expected that more embedded employees would report less intention of leaving than less embedded employees.

H6: Job embeddedness will be negatively related to turnover intention.

Additional predictors. I also assessed job satisfaction and the Big Five personality traits. Job satisfaction, assessed in this study as overall positive affect regarding one's job, has been shown to be correlated with other job attitudes and behavior. I expected that employees who were more satisfied with their jobs would also feel more embedded and more compatible, in terms of values, goals, and plans, with their organizations. I also expected high job satisfaction to be associated with performing less withdrawal (i.e., deviant) behaviors at work and having less intention of leaving the organization.

H7: Job satisfaction will be positively related to job embeddedness and image compatibility and negatively related to work withdrawal and turnover intention.

Figure 4. Job embeddedness as a moderator.



Note. Relationship between perceived justice and image compatibility depends on level of job embeddedness.

I also explored the extent to which individual differences were related to the model constructs (e.g., perceived justice, job embeddedness, work withdrawal, and turnover intentions). In particular, I expected that more agreeable and conscientious employees would report higher levels of job embeddedness; that employees who were more emotionally stable and agreeable would perceive the workplace shocks as relatively more just; and, that more emotionally stable and conscientious employees would report fewer withdrawal behaviors and less intention to leave their organizations.

H8a: Agreeableness will be positively related to job embeddedness.

H8b: Agreeableness will be positively related to perceived justice.

H9a: Conscientiousness will be positively related to job embeddedness.

H9b: Conscientiousness will be negatively related to work withdrawal and turnover intention.

H10a: Emotional stability will be negatively related to shock severity.

H10b: Emotional stability will be positively related to perceived justice.

H10c: Emotional stability will be negatively related to work withdrawal behavior and turnover intention.

CHAPTER 4

METHOD

Participants

Registered Nurses (RNs) were recruited, primarily through professional nursing organizations and advertisements in nursing journals, to participate in this study. Two hundred and eight nurses completed the study. Four of the nurse participants reported shock events from a previous job, therefore their data were excluded. Thus, the sample characteristics and results reported are based on 204 nurse participants (187 females and 17 males; M age = 43.2, SD = 11.0; see Table 1 for additional characteristics of the sample).

Participants varied in years of nursing experience, ranging from less than 1 year to 44 years; the average number of years as a RN was 16.5 (SD = 11.0). Participation was limited to nurses that were currently employed, at least part-time, by a hospital. The majority was employed by large (i.e., 300 or more beds) hospitals (n = 118), and the average tenure at their current employer was 7.7 years (SD = 7.5). The average time in their current job was 4.9 years (SD = 5.2), as many nurses had received at least one promotion since being employed by their current hospital (n = 165). The sample was comprised of Staff RNs, of varying levels and specialties (68.0%); Charge Nurses and Nurse Managers (13.0%); Educators (e.g., Education Resource Specialist, Lactation Consultant) and Program Coordinators (11.3%); Associate Directors and Directors of Nursing (5.3%); and Nurse Practitioners (2.4%).

Table 1. Characteristics of the study sample.

	<i>Total</i>	<i>% Total</i>
<i>Gender</i>		
Female	187	91.7
Male	17	8.3
<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>		
African American/Black	19	9.3
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1	0.5
Asian	35	17.2
Caucasian/White	120	58.8
Hispanic/Latino	19	9.3
Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian	2	1.0
Other/Two or more races	7	3.4
Not reported	1	0.5
<i>Highest Level of Education</i>		
Associate's Degree in Nursing (ADN)	48	23.5
Bachelor's Degree in Nursing (BSN or BS)	108	53.0
Graduate Degree (MA, MS, or PhD)	48	23.5
<i>Nursing Specialty Area</i>		
Cardiology	9	4.4
Emergency Room	9	4.4
Intensive Care	20	9.8
Labor & Delivery	18	8.8
Medical/Surgical	24	11.8
Neurology	2	1.0
Oncology	13	6.4
Operating Room	30	14.7
Pediatrics	5	2.5
Psychiatry	7	3.4
Other/Two or more areas	66	32.4
Not reported	1	0.5
<i>Hospital Location</i>		
Northwest / West	14	6.9
Southwest	96	47.1
Midwest	28	13.7
Southeast	30	14.7
Northeast	15	7.4
<i>Total</i>	204	100.0

Design and Procedure

The study consisted of a survey questionnaire, administered through a web-based survey provider. Recruitment materials directed interested nurses to access the study questionnaire on-line. The consent form was presented first and informed participants that they would be asked to describe a negative workplace event and answer follow-up questions regarding the event. Additionally, they were informed that they would also be asked to answer demographic and employment items and complete measures of personality traits and various job attitudes. Participants were also told that they would receive a \$15 gift card in exchange for completing the study (3 participants declined the gift card). Finally, they were assured that their data would be confidential, not shared with coworkers or any other nurses, and reported only in aggregate with no identifying information.

After consenting to participate, participants were presented with the personality trait measure, followed by measures of job satisfaction, job embeddedness, and organizational justice. Next, participants described the workplace event or experience that “had the most significant impact on your feelings and thoughts about your job” and how they and their employer (or more specifically, supervisor) handled the event. Participants were instructed to think about how they felt when they experienced this event and complete the measure of perceived justice. They also completed measures of work withdrawal, image violation, and turnover intentions. Because participants reported and reflected on a negative workplace event, I was concerned that participants would complete the study feeling upset or depressed about their job. Therefore, I asked them to list the top three things they liked about their current job and/or being a nurse.

Completion of the study took approximately 25 minutes (see Appendix A for study questionnaire).

Coworker participation. The nurse coworkers of the study participants were surveyed to validate participants' self-report data. Participants provided the name and contact information of one or two coworkers whom they worked with on their last shift or worked with regularly and could confirm their employment and comment on their workplace. I contacted these coworkers via email and asked them to participate in a short research study. They were informed that their coworker (i.e., the study participant, who was named in the email solicitation) had recently participated in a nursing research study and had named them as someone who could report on their workplace and validate their employment. The coworkers learned that they would answer questions about their workplace and named coworker (i.e., the study participant) and that their participation would take only 5 to 10 minutes. As incentive to participate, coworkers earned the opportunity to enter a lottery for one of six \$50 gift cards (see Appendix B for coworker questionnaire).

One hundred and sixty participants provided contact information for at least one coworker. I contacted these coworkers via email and asked them to participate in this study. Of the approximately 160 coworkers contacted, 98 (88 females and 10 males; M age = 44.6, SD = 11.2) completed evaluations of nurse participants. Thus, there are data for 98 matched participant-coworker pairs. Coworkers reported working with the participants for an average of 6.25 years (SD = 6.68).

Measures

Shock, workplace event. Based on previous research on job stress, burnout, and turnover among nurses (e.g., Gary-Toft & Anderson, 1981; Lee et al., 1999; McVicar, 2003; Morrell et al., 2004), I compiled a list of 14 commonly reported negative workplace events and experiences. Example events include unpleasant interactions with others (e.g., “Dealt with difficult, demanding patient or patient’s relative(s)/visitor(s),” “Physician, supervisor, coworker, or patient/patient’s relative(s)/visitor(s) criticized my nursing care”), lacking resources or training needed to do job tasks, and adverse management decisions (e.g., “Did not receive a promotion or pay raise,” “Change in organizational or unit policy implemented,” “Denied request for time-off or schedule/shift change”). Participants selected the single event that had the *most significant* impact on their feelings and thoughts about their job. There was an “Other event” write-in option for participants whose event was not listed. Then, they described the circumstances surrounding the event in a couple sentences.

Additionally, participants rated the shock event on six different characteristics: (1) whether it was expected or unexpected; (2) whether it was unavoidable or avoidable; (3) the extent to which the event affected others in the workplace; (4) the extent to which they believed the organization was responsible for the event; (5) how upsetting the event was; and (6) how frequently they had experience the event. Participants responded to each item on 5-point Likert type scales (e.g., 1 (*very unexpected*) to 5 (*very expected*)).

Some of these shock characteristics (e.g., extent to which it was expected/unexpected and avoidable/unavoidable) were included in previous research (Lee et al., 1999; Morrell et al., 2004). For example, previous research found that workplace

shocks were often unexpected, but avoidable events. Additional items were presumed to be indicators of how distressing the shock event was. I expected that more severe shocks would be those events that affected others at work to a greater extent, were perceived as being the responsibility of the organization, and were more upsetting. Whether expected or unexpected events would be perceived as more severe shocks was not clear: On the one hand, an unexpected event, one that was not foreseen or even imagined, would likely be more distressing than an anticipated event; on the other hand, an expected shock may be one that occurs regularly and therefore quite distressing. Because this event, which had the most significant impact on their feelings and thoughts about their job, could have been experienced more than once, or even on a regular basis, I felt that it was important to assess how frequently the shock event occurred. I presumed that event frequency would be positively related to how distressing the shock was. In sum, these shock characteristic items assessed how distressing the event was, or the overall severity of the shock event.

Shock, organization response. Participants also indicated their employers' (or supervisors') responses to the shock event. More specifically, they were asked, "How did your employer handle the event? That is, what actions did the organization and/or your supervisor take in response to the event?" Responses were open-ended. Additionally, participants indicated responses to the following: (1) Was the organization's response unexpected or expected? Responses were reported on a 1 (*very unexpected*) to 5 (*very expected*) scale; (2) Do you think your organization could have handled the event better? Responses were reported on a 5-point scale anchored 1 (*no, good response*) and 5 (*yes*,

definitely); and (3) How satisfied were you with the organization's response to this event? Responses were reported on a 1 (*extremely dissatisfied*) to 5 (*extremely satisfied*) scale.

Personality traits. The 50-item International Personality Item Pool (IPIP) measure of the Big Five personality traits (Goldberg et al., 2006) assessed agreeableness, conscientiousness, extraversion, neuroticism, and openness to experience. Participants rated how accurately each statement described them. Example statements include, "Am the life of the party", "Am always prepared", and "Worry about things." Participants responded on a scale anchored by 1 (*very inaccurate*) and 5 (*very accurate*).

Job satisfaction. Mitchell et al.'s (2001) three-item scale assessed overall satisfaction rather than satisfaction with specific components of a job (e.g., Spector, 1997). The three items were: "All in all, I am satisfied with my job," "In general, I don't like my job (*reverse-scored*)," and "In general, I like working here." Participants rated the extent to which they agreed with the statements according to the following scale, 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*).

Job embeddedness. The nine on-the-job embeddedness items from Felps et al. (2009) organizational embeddedness measure were used. Three items assess each of the three facets of embeddedness: fit, links, and sacrifice. Example items include, "I feel like I am a good match for my organization," "I work closely with my coworkers," and "I would sacrifice a lot if I left this job." Participants responded to all items on the following scale, 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*).

Organizational justice. Overall perceptions of justice or fairness at work were assessed separately from perceived justice regarding the negative workplace event. Ambrose and Schminke's (2009) six-item measure of organizational justice was used to

assess overall fairness. Example items include, “In general, the treatment I receive at work is fair,” and “For the most part, my organization treats its employees fairly.” Participants rated their agreement with each statement from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*).

Perceived justice. Perceived justice concerning the shock experience (both the negative workplace event and the organization’s response) was assessed with eight items from Colquitt’s (2001) measure of organizational justice. Two items representing each of the four types of organizational justice—distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational—were selected. Example items include, “The event or outcome of the event was justified, given my behavior and/or company circumstances,” “Procedures that led to or are related to the event were applied consistently throughout the organization,” and “Others involved in this event treated me with respect.” Participants were indicated how they felt when they experienced the shock event and rate the extent to which they agreed with each item, from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Thus, low scores reflected greater injustice.

Image compatibility. The image compatibility measure consisted of six items, based on Lee et al.’s (1999) measure. Value, goal, and plan compatibility were each assessed by two items. In previous research, image compatibility was assessed among voluntary leavers; therefore, some items were revised for this study (e.g., “At my former firm, ...” was changed to “At my organization, ...”). Example items include, “My values are compatible with my organization” and “At this organization, my career is progressing as I hoped.” Participants responded to all items on the following scale, 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Similar measures have been used to assess overall image

compatibility (e.g., Lee et al., 1996, 1999; Morrell et al., 2008); compatibility with specific types of images (e.g., values, goals, or plans) has not been assessed.

Work withdrawal. Work withdrawal refers to behaviors used to withdraw from work (i.e., avoid aspects of work role) while maintaining current organization membership (Hanisch & Hulin, 1990). Work withdrawal was assessed by asking participants to report how frequently, from 1 (*never*) to 7 (*always*), they had performed various behaviors. The list of behaviors actually included both withdrawal and engaged behaviors (Hanisch and Hulin, 1990, 1991; see also, Hanisch, 1991). Engaged behaviors are those suggestive of being engaged or committed to one's work. No specific hypotheses were made regarding engaged behaviors; they were included primarily to make nurses feel more comfortable reporting withdrawal behaviors. That is, I hoped that giving nurses the opportunity to report the good behaviors they perform at work would encourage them to report their *less good* work behaviors as well. Example withdrawal behaviors include "Postponed completing job duties" and "Attended to personal matters at work;" work withdrawal was computed by averaging responses to the withdrawal behavior items. Engaged behaviors include "Stayed late or worked extra hours" and "Initiated needed changes in your workplace;" engaged behavior was computed by averaging responses to the engaged behavior items. Therefore, for both the withdrawal and engaged behavior scales, higher scores reflect performing more of those behaviors.

Turnover intention. This measure was used to measure the other part of organizational withdrawal, intentions and efforts to remove oneself from a specific organization and job (Hanisch & Hulin, 1990). An eight-item measure was created from existing measures of job withdrawal and turnover intentions (e.g., Boswell & Olson-

Buchanan, 2004; Hanisch & Hulin, 1990; Mitchell et al., 2001) to assess alternative job search behavior, turnover intentions, and career change plans. Additionally, participants were asked to think about their careers and report where they saw themselves in one year and in five years.

Coworker evaluation. The coworker evaluation measure was created for this study to assess nurses' job performance, particularly the ability to cope with workplace stress, and commitment to nursing. Items include "This nurse is a responsible employee," "This nurse often seems stressed out or overwhelmed" (reverse-scored), and "This nurse is committed to the profession of nursing." Coworkers of the participants completed the measure, and responses were reported on 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) scale.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS

The results are divided into three sections. The first section contains findings regarding the workplace shock experiences, including data about the shock event and the organization's shock event response. The second section contains findings regarding predictors and criteria. It also includes discussions of personality trait and job attitude results as well as the coworker evaluation of the participant's job performance. More importantly, this section includes tests of the hypotheses and proposed model of the evaluations and effects of a workplace shock experience. The final, third section contains supplemental analyses of the types of shock events and organization shock responses reported.

Workplace Shock Experience

Shock Event

Nurses identified the single workplace events that had most significantly affected how they thought and felt about their job and rated these shock events on a number of characteristics. Specifically, they rated the frequency of the shock event and the extent to which it was expected, avoidable, affected others in the workplace, the responsibility of the organization, and upsetting. The means, standard deviations, and correlations for the shock characteristics are presented in Table 2. The means for all of the shock characteristic items were mid-range on the 5-point scale. On average, the identified shock was reported as having been experienced occasionally and was neither an overwhelmingly expected or unexpected event nor an avoidable or unavoidable event.

Table 2. Means, standard deviations, and correlation matrix for shock and organization response items.

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Shock, frequency	3.22	1.19								
2. Shock, expected	2.71	1.27	.39**							
3. Shock, upsetting	3.84	1.09	.13	-.17*						
4. Shock, affected others	3.63	1.34	.26**	.05	.37**					
5. Shock, organization responsible	3.49	1.47	.29**	.11	.38**	.37**				
6. Shock, avoidable	3.14	1.55	.25**	-.05	.16*	.11	.17*			
7. Organization Response, expected	3.31	1.23	.22**	.40**	-.09	.10	-.06	.04		
8. Organization Response, handled well	2.34	1.43	-.22**	-.02	-.41**	-.27**	-.56**	-.17*	.27**	
9. Organization Response, satisfactory	2.53	1.27	-.19*	.08	-.39**	-.21**	-.45**	.11	.41**	.67**

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Nurses also reported, overall, that the shock event affected others at least somewhat and was more than moderately upsetting.

These characteristics—the frequency of the shock event, the extent to which it was expected, avoidable, affected others in the workplace, the responsibility of the organization, and upsetting—were expected to represent how distressing, or severe, the shock event was. An exploratory factor analysis was conducted to reduce the number of items assessing shock severity (see Table 3). Principal axis factoring extracted two factors with eigenvalues greater than one: Factor 1 represented how upsetting the shock event was (shock severity); Factor 2 represented how frequently the event occurred (shock occurrence). Based on this analysis, I created two composites of the shock event: (1) shock severity (created by averaging scores on the upsetting, organization responsible, and affected others items; $\alpha = .64$), and (2) shock occurrence (created by averaging scores on the frequency and expected items; $\alpha = .56$). The item assessing whether the shock event was unavoidable or avoidable was not included because it did not load on either factor (i.e., factor loading was less than .30). The shock severity and shock occurrence composites were used in further analyses.

Table 3. Factor loadings for shock characteristic items.

Shock Characteristic	Factor Loadings	
	Factor 1	Factor 2
1. Shock, upsetting	.736	-.264
2. Shock, organization responsible	.580	.129
3. Shock, affected others	.545	.068
4. Shock, avoidable	.259	.071
5. Shock, expected	.132	.644
6. Shock, frequency	.289	.632

Organization's Shock Response

Participants also rated the shock response on whether it was unexpected or expected, how well the organization handled the event, and how satisfied they were with the organization's response. The item assessing how well the organization handled the event was reverse-scored so that a high score on this item reflected handling the event well. On average, participants tended to think that their supervisors or employers could have handled the events better ($M = 2.34$, $SD = 1.43$), and they were fairly dissatisfied with the organization's response ($M = 2.53$, $SD = 1.27$).

An exploratory factor analysis was conducted to determine if the organization response items reflected an underlying factor of satisfaction with the shock response (see Table 4). Principal axis factoring extracted one factor, which represented organization-response satisfaction. Because all three items loaded on this factor, responses for all three items were averaged to create an organization-response satisfaction composite ($\alpha = .71$), which was used in further analyses.

Table 4. Factor loadings for organization response items.

	Factor Loadings
Organization Response Characteristic	
1. Organization response was satisfying	.988
2. Organization handled the event well	.670
3. Organization response was expected	.405

Satisfaction with the organization's shock response was negatively correlated with shock severity ($r = -.40, p < .01$), indicating that nurses were less satisfied with how the organization (or supervisor) handled severe workplace shocks. Alternatively, it may be that judgments of how upsetting the shock was were influenced by how the organization responded to the shock event.

Predictors and Criteria

Personality Traits

Mean scores for the Big Five traits are presented in Table 5, and correlations between the traits and study constructs are presented in Table 6. Although not hypothesized, agreeableness, emotional stability, and conscientiousness were positively correlated with job satisfaction and image compatibility. Nurses who reported higher levels of these traits also reported greater overall liking of their jobs and organizations and perceived their values, goals, and career plans as more compatible with their organizations. Significant findings are described below.

Job embeddedness. As expected (Hypotheses 8a and 9a), agreeableness and conscientiousness were positively related to job embeddedness ($r = .24$ and $.21$, respectively, see Table 6). To better understand the relationships between these traits and job embeddedness, I examined the correlations between the agreeableness and conscientiousness and the three facets of embeddedness: fit, links, and sacrifice. Both traits were positively correlated with the links facet ($r = .33$ and $.19$, respectively, $p < .01$); nurses high in agreeableness and conscientiousness reported working frequently and closely with coworkers. Agreeableness and conscientiousness also were positively related to the fit facet ($r = .21$ and $.24$, respectively, $p < .01$), believing that the organization was

Table 5. Means, standard deviations, and internal reliabilities for predictors, shock composites, and criteria.

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>α</i>
<i>Predictors</i>			
Personality Traits			
Agreeableness	4.24	0.47	.75
Emotional Stability	3.47	0.76	.88
Conscientiousness	4.06	0.52	.78
Openness	3.64	0.59	.77
Extraversion	3.23	0.72	.84
Job Attitudes			
Job Satisfaction	5.59	1.29	.80
Job Embeddedness	5.58	1.10	.90
Organizational Justice	5.00	1.30	.88
<i>Shock Composites</i>			
Shock Severity	3.65	1.00	.64
Shock Occurrence	2.96	1.02	.56
Organization Response	2.73	1.04	.71
Perceived Justice	4.19	1.27	.84
<i>Criteria</i>			
Work Withdrawal Behavior	1.72	0.50	.81
Engaged Behavior	3.50	0.52	.57
Turnover Intentions	2.40	1.27	.84

Note. $N = 204$.

Table 6. Correlations between personality traits and study constructs.

	Agreeableness	Emotional Stability	Conscientiousness	Openness	Extraversion
1. Job Satisfaction	.24**	.23**	.24**	.08	.09
2. Job Embeddedness	.24**	.13	.21**	-.03	.13
3. Organizational Justice	.19**	.20**	.10	.03	.03
4. Shock Severity	.12	-.05	.18*	.15*	.04
5. Shock Occurrence	.00	-.20**	.04	.02	-.01
6. Organization Response	-.07	.00	-.07	-.10	-.04
7. Perceived Justice (shock-related)	.05	.04	-.06	-.05	.03
8. Image Compatibility	.24**	.15*	.20**	.00	.11
9. Work Withdrawal behaviors	-.36**	-.26**	-.29**	-.12	-.01
10. Engaged behaviors	.10	.00	.10	.13	.14*
11. Turnover Intentions	-.24**	-.20**	-.24**	.04	-.05

Note. $N = 204$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

a good match and a place that utilized his or her skills and talents well. Lastly, both traits were marginally related to the third facet of job embeddedness, perceived sacrifice (for agreeableness $r = .12, p = .09$; for conscientiousness, $r = .13, p = .06$).

Shock severity and perceived justice. Only one specific hypothesis regarding shock severity and personality traits was made; Hypothesis 10a stated that emotional stability would be negatively related to shock severity. This hypothesis was not supported ($r = -.05, ns$). However, emotional stability was significantly correlated with shock occurrence ($r = -.20, p < .01$). Nurses who have higher levels of emotional stability are, on average, less likely to be easily upset and reported that the shock event occurred less frequently compared to nurses with low levels of emotional stability. Conscientiousness and openness were significantly correlated with shock severity ($r = .18$ and $.15$, respectively, $p < .05$). Nurses who have higher levels of these traits reported shocks were more severe compared to nurses with lower levels of these traits.

Emotional stability and agreeableness were expected to be positively related to perceived justice regarding the shock (Hypotheses 8b and 10b), but neither was significantly correlated with perceived justice ($r = .04$ and $.05$, respectively, ns). However, emotional stability and agreeableness were positively related to the overall measure of organizational justice ($r = .20$ and $.19$, respectively p 's $< .01$). So, nurses with high levels of these traits, compared to nurses low in emotional stability and agreeableness, reported that their organizations treated employees fairly overall but did not perceive the shock event and surrounding circumstances as significantly more (or less) fair. No hypotheses were made about personality traits and the extent to which the

organization's response was perceived as satisfying, and none of the traits was significantly correlated with organizational response satisfaction.

Work withdrawal and turnover intention. As expected, emotional stability and conscientiousness were negatively related to both work withdrawal and turnover intention (Hypotheses 10c and 9b). More emotionally stable nurses were less likely to perform job withdrawal behaviors ($r = -.26, p < .01$) and had less intention of leaving their current organization and the nursing profession ($r = -.20, p < .01$). Similarly, more conscientious nurses were less likely to perform withdrawal behaviors ($r = -.29, p < .01$), such as allowing others to do their work, and had less intent to turnover ($r = -.24, p < .01$). Agreeableness was negatively correlated with work withdrawal and turnover intention ($r = -.36$ and $-.24$, respectively, $p < .01$), as well. Nurses with high levels of agreeableness also reported performing fewer withdrawal behaviors (e.g., being absent from work, making excuses to get out of work) and turnover intentions.

Job Satisfaction

As predicted, job satisfaction was positively correlated with job embeddedness and image compatibility and negatively correlated with turnover intention (Hypothesis 7). I also expected job satisfaction to be negatively related to work withdrawal behavior, but this relationship was not significant. Additionally, job satisfaction was significantly correlated with shock severity and organization response satisfaction (see Table 7). Nurses who reported higher job satisfaction also perceived the shock event as significantly less severe ($r = -.19, p < .01$) and the organization's response to the shock as more satisfying ($r = .31, p < .01$). Because job satisfaction was correlated with many constructs and very highly correlated with a few, such as job embeddedness ($r = .76, p <$

.01), organizational justice ($r = .66, p < .01$), and image compatibility ($r = .74, p < .01$), it was likely that significant correlations between two constructs correlated with job satisfaction were due, in part, to variance shared with job satisfaction rather than a unique relationship between the two. For instance, job embeddedness and organizational justice were highly correlated ($r = .62, p < .01$), but both were also highly correlated with job satisfaction ($r = .76$ and $.66$, respectively, $p < .01$).

To gain a better understanding of the relationships between the study constructs, correlations between the constructs controlling for job satisfaction were also computed and are presented in Table 8. The correlations in Table 8 were mostly the same as those in Table 7 (i.e., direction and significance of the correlation coefficient) but smaller in magnitude. However, there were a few correlations that were no longer controlling for job satisfaction: For example, job embeddedness was not significantly correlated with shock severity or organization-response satisfaction. Similarly, controlling for nurses' job satisfaction, neither the severity nor perceived justice of the shock event was not significantly correlated with turnover intention (see Table 8).

Table 7. Correlations between predictors, shock composites, and criteria.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Job Satisfaction										
2. Job Embeddedness	.76**									
3. Organizational Justice (overall)	.66**	.62**								
4. Shock Severity	-.19**	-.14*	-.33**							
5. Shock Occurrence	-.05	-.05	-.06	.19*						
6. Organization Response	.31**	.28**	.45**	-.44**	.06					
7. Perceived Justice (shock-related)	.31**	.34**	.41**	-.31**	.03	.60**				
8. Image Compatibility	.74**	.79**	.66**	-.18*	-.02	.29**	.38**			
9. Work Withdrawal behaviors	-.12	-.04	-.09	-.10	.03	.11	.07	-.05		
10. Engaged behaviors	.10	.13	.08	.14*	-.01	-.05	-.07	.18*	-.08	
11. Turnover Intentions	-.54**	-.58**	-.47**	.17*	.03	-.28**	-.22**	-.55**	.20**	.02

Note. $N = 204$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 8. Correlations between predictors, shock composites, and criteria, controlling for job satisfaction.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Job Embeddedness									
2. Organizational Justice (overall)	.25**								
3. Shock Severity	-.01	-.29**							
4. Shock Occurrence	-.01	-.04	.19*						
5. Organization Response	.09	.35**	-.40**	.07					
6. Perceived Justice (shock-related)	.18*	.29**	-.26**	.05	.55**				
7. Image Compatibility	.49**	.34**	-.07	.04	.11	.26**			
8. Work Withdrawal behaviors	.08	-.01	-.12	.02	.16*	.11	.05		
9. Engaged behaviors	.08	.01	.16*	.00	-.08	-.10	.16*	-.07	
10. Turnover Intentions	-.31**	-.18*	.09	.00	-.14*	-.07	-.27**	.16*	.09

Note. $N = 204$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Coworker Evaluation

The coworker evaluation items were created to assess different facets (i.e., stress management, commitment to the nursing unit) of job performance. An exploratory factor analysis was conducted to determine if the items assessed different facets of job performance. Principal axis factoring extracted three factors with eigenvalues greater than one (see Table 9): Factor 1 represented commitment to the nursing profession; Factor 2 represented commitment to the nurse's unit (i.e., being a team player); and Factor 3 represented effective stress management. Interestingly, the item assessing overall job performance loaded onto the stress management factor. I created a composite variable for each factor by averaging the items that loaded onto that factor (also see Table 9 for the composite means and reliability estimates).

Coworkers reported how well they knew the participant, how many years they had worked with the participant, and how frequently they worked with participant; none of these factors was significantly related to evaluations of the participant. Nurses' job performance, as evaluated by their coworkers, was not significantly related to the nurse's reported shock experiences. Job performance was also not significantly related to nurses' level of job satisfaction or job embeddedness. Nevertheless, coworkers' evaluation of job performance was significantly correlated with nurses' self-reported image compatibility, work withdrawal behavior, and turnover intention (see Table 10). In particular, nurses who reported performing more work withdrawal behaviors were perceived by their coworkers as being significantly less committed to their nursing unit ($r = -.33, p < .01$). Additionally, nurses who were perceived as being able to effectively cope with

Table 9. Factor loadings for coworker evaluation items.

<i>Coworker Evaluation Item</i>	Factor Loadings		
	Factor 1 <i>Commitment to Profession</i>	Factor 2 <i>Commitment to Unit/Hospital</i>	Factor 3 <i>Stress Management</i>
1. This nurse is a responsible employee.	.899	.031	.015
2. This nurse is committed to the profession of nursing.	.836	.011	-.007
3. This nurse is not a team-player.	-.012	.991	-.025
4. This nurse is not committed to our unit and/or organization.	.065	.575	.062
5. This nurse copes effectively with workplace stress.	.032	-.136	.868
6. This nurse often seems stressed out or overwhelmed.	-.091	.263	.528
7. Overall, I would rate this nurse's job performance as...	.037	.064	.477
<i>M</i>	6.68	6.40	5.95
<i>SD</i>	1.09	1.30	1.04
<i>Reliability (α)</i>	0.86	0.73	0.58

Table 10. Correlations between coworker evaluation ratings and (participant self-report) study constructs.

	Coworker Evaluations		
	<i>Commitment to Profession</i>	<i>Commitment to Unit/Hospital</i>	<i>Stress Management</i>
1. Job Satisfaction	.04	.04	.10
2. Job Embeddedness	-.07	.07	.12
3. Organizational Justice (overall)	-.09	.12	.20*
4. Shock Severity	.15	-.08	-.11
5. Shock Occurrence	.00	.12	-.03
6. Organization Response	.12	-.06	.16
7. Perceived Justice (shock-related)	.16	.03	.16
8. Image Compatibility	.05	.13	.21*
9. Work Withdrawal behaviors	-.10	-.33**	-.14
10. Engaged behaviors	.12	.05	-.16
11. Turnover Intentions	.12	-.15	-.26**

Note. $N = 98$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

workplace stress reported significantly greater image compatibility ($r = .21, p < .05$) and less intention of leaving the organization ($r = -.26, p < .01$).

Test of Hypotheses and the Model

Correlations. The means, standard deviations, and reliability estimates for the shock composites, predictors, and criteria are presented in Table 5, and the correlations are presented in Table 7. Table 8 shows the correlations among study variables controlling for job satisfaction.

As shown in Table 8, shock occurrence was not significantly correlated with any of the constructs (one exception being shock severity), suggesting that the frequency of the shock event did not affect job attitudes, withdrawal behavior, or turnover intention. As such, shock occurrence was not included in subsequent analyses. Additionally, the amount of engaged work behaviors that nurses performed was not related to their job attitudes or turnover intention. The engaged behavior measure had low internal reliability ($\alpha = .56$), which likely attenuated correlations between engaged behavior and job attitudes and turnover intention. Low internal consistency of the engaged behavior measure may have been a function of the breadth of the engaged behavior items. Engaged behaviors ranged from working after hours (which may have been performed out of necessity rather than positive feelings about one's job) to helping coworkers to initiating workplace changes and promoting the organization. Nonetheless, engaged behavior was significantly correlated with image compatibility ($r = .18, p < .05$), as well as shock severity ($r = .14, p < .05$). That is, nurses who reported greater values, goals, and plans compatibility with their organizations also reported more engaged behavior, including helping coworkers and working extra hours. Interestingly, the perceived severity of the

experienced shock was also positively related to performing engaged behaviors. Perhaps nurses who were quite upset by the reported shock event performed more of these behaviors, such as initiating changes in their workplace and training coworkers regarding specific procedures or protocols to resolve the shock event or prevent it from reoccurring. Due to the lack of significant correlations with most variables, engaged behavior also was not included in subsequent analyses.

The shock experience was expected to be evaluated in terms of perceived justice (Hypothesis 1). As hypothesized, shock severity was negatively related to perceived justice ($r = -.26, p < .01$), and organization response satisfaction was positively related to perceived justice ($r = .55, p < .01$). Nurses who perceived the shock event as more severe (i.e., more upsetting, the organization's responsibility, affecting others to a greater extent) also perceived it as being more unjust or unfair. However, nurses who were more satisfied with how their organization (or supervisor) handled the shock event perceived the event as being fairer.

In turn, perceived justice regarding the shock experience was expected to be related to nurses' image compatibility (Hypothesis 2). This hypothesis was also supported: Perceived justice was positively related to image compatibility ($r = .26, p < .01$). As predicted, nurses who perceived the shock experience as more fair reported that their values, goals, and plans were more similar to those of their organizations. Alternatively, nurses who perceived the shock experience as very unfair also reported feeling that their values, goals, and plans were less compatible with their organizations' values, goals, and plans. Nurses' withdrawal behavior was predicted to be influenced by

perceived justice of the shock (Hypothesis 4), but this hypothesis was not supported ($r = .11, p > .05$).

As predicted (Hypothesis 5), image compatibility was negatively related to turnover intention ($r = -.27, p < .01$). Nurses who reported their values, goals, and plans as more compatible with their organizations had significantly less intention of leaving their current employer. Additionally, job embeddedness was negatively related to turnover intention (Hypothesis 6; $r = -.58, p < .01$). Nurses who felt embedded, in terms of fit, links to others, and perceived sacrifices associated with leaving, reported less intention of leaving the organization.

Path analysis of the model. A path analysis permits simultaneous estimation of the unique effects of all study variables, in addition to a test of the proposed interaction. To test the proposed interaction, a perceived justice - job embeddedness interaction term was created by first centering both variables and then multiplying participants' centered perceived justice and centered job embeddedness scores (Aiken & West, 1991). Because job satisfaction was significantly correlated with all model constructs (one exception being work withdrawal) and because controlling for job satisfaction did not change the pattern of relationships between constructs, the zero-order correlation matrix was used in the path analysis (Table 7).

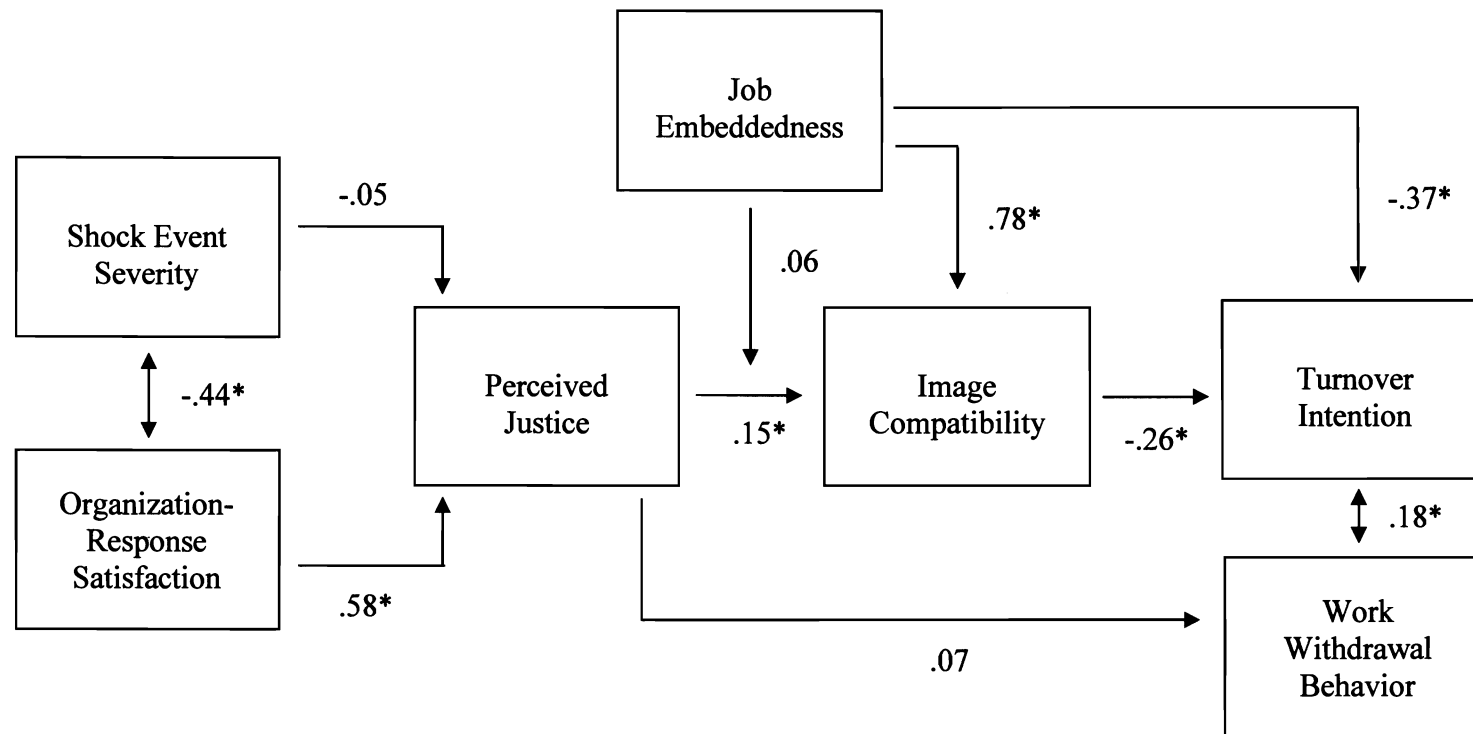
Three changes were made to the model shown in Figure 3. First, shock severity and organization-response satisfaction were allowed to correlate. I did not hypothesize how shock severity and organization-response satisfaction would be related, but a negative relationship, as suggested by the zero-order correlation, is aligned with the unfolding model theory (Lee & Mitchell, 1994) and my proposed model. Recounting a

negative workplace experience, employees are able to reflect on the shock event and the organization's response to the shock event separately, but perceptions of how upsetting the shock event was and how well the organization handled the event are negatively correlated. Second, job embeddedness and image compatibility were allowed to correlate as both are important determinants of employee retention (Holtom & Inderrieden, 2006; Lee et al., 1999; Morrell et al., 2008). Third, work withdrawal and turnover intention were allowed to correlate, as work withdrawal behavior is positively correlated with thoughts of and efforts to leave the organization (Hanisch & Hulin, 1991). I tested this model (see Figure 5) using M-Plus version 4.2 (Muthén & Muthén, 1998). The results, including all path coefficients, are shown in Figure 5. The model fit was acceptable, $\chi^2(13) = 26.75, p = .014$, RMSEA = .07 and CFI = .97 (Byrne, 1998).

Although both shock severity and organization-response satisfaction were significantly correlated with perceived justice (see Table 8), only organization-response satisfaction predicted justice perceptions of the shock experience, when estimating the model. That is, the severity of the shock event did not impact how unjust or unfair nurses perceived the shock experience to be (i.e., Hypothesis 1a was not supported); however, nurse satisfaction with the organization's (or supervisor's) response to the event was positively related to perceived justice, showing support for Hypothesis 1b. Shock severity and organization-response satisfaction accounted for 35.7% of the variance in perceived justice.

In turn, perceived justice regarding the shock experience was expected to be positively related to nurses' image compatibility. As predicted (Hypothesis 2), nurses who perceived the shock experience as more fair reported that their values, goals, and

Figure 5. Model of the evaluation and effects of a workplace shock experience.



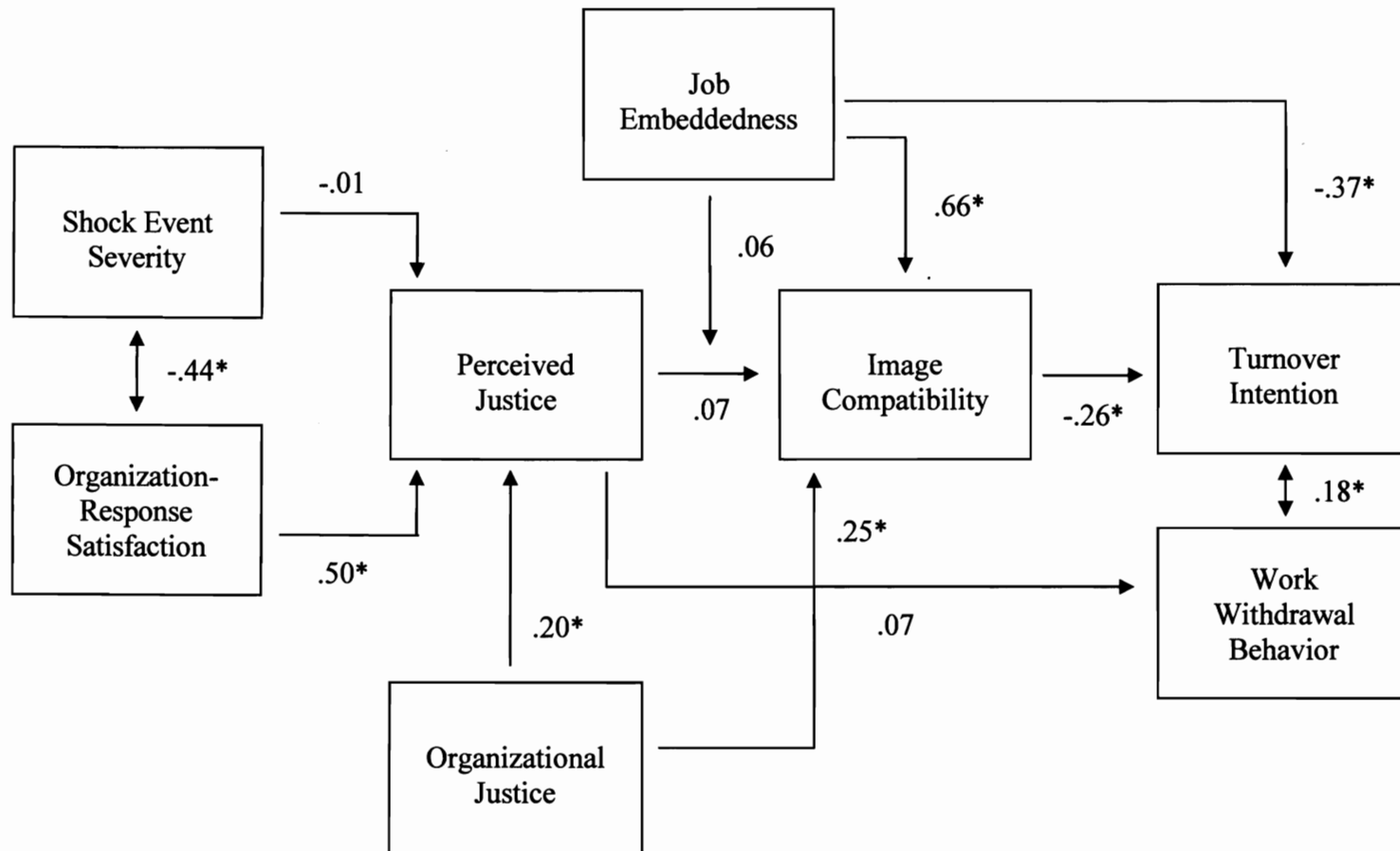
Note. Model fit was acceptable, RMSEA = .072 and CFI = .966; $N = 203$. *significant path coefficient, $p < .05$.

plans were more similar to those of their organization. Job embeddedness was also positively related to image compatibility. However, the relationship between perceived justice and image compatibility did not depend on nurses' level of job embeddedness (i.e., Hypothesis 3 was not supported). That is, the proposed perceived justice - job embeddedness interaction was not significant. Together these predictors accounted for 63.4% of the variance in image compatibility.

Job embeddedness and image compatibility were expected to be negatively related to turnover intention. As predicted (Hypothesis 6), job embeddedness was associated with significantly less intention of leaving the organization. Additionally, image compatibility significantly affected turnover intention: Nurses who reported their values, goals, and plans as more compatible with their organization had significantly less intention of leaving (i.e., Hypothesis 5 was supported). Job embeddedness and image compatibility accounted for 34.8% of the variance in turnover intention. Perceived justice of the shock experience was also expected to affect nurses' work withdrawal behavior; however, perceived justice was not significantly related to work withdrawal (i.e., Hypothesis 4 was not supported). That is, the extent to which nurses perceived shocks as unfair or fair did not affect the amount of withdraw behaviors they performed.

Organizational justice. The same model with the addition of organizational justice was tested (see Figure 6). Organizational justice was assessed as employees' holistic or overall assessment of justice in their workplace and organization (i.e., the extent to which the organization is perceived as treating employees fairly). It seems likely that overall justice perceptions influence how fair or unfair employees perceived the shock experience to be. It is also plausible that organizational justice affects how

Figure 6. Model of the evaluation and effects of a workplace shock experience, including organization justice.



Note. Model fit was acceptable, RMSEA = .072 and CFI = .964; $N = 203$. *significant path coefficient, $p < .05$.

compatible nurses perceive their values, goals, and plans to be with those of the organization. Indeed, organizational justice was significantly positively correlated with both perceived justice and image compatibility (see Table 8); nurses who agreed they could count on their organizations to be fair reported the shock experience as being more just or fair and greater compatibility between their values, goals, and plans and those of the organization. Therefore, paths between organizational justice and perceived justice regarding the shock event and organizational justice and image compatibility were estimated. The model fit was acceptable, $\chi^2 (15) = 31.00, p = .009$, RMSEA = .07 and CFI = .96 (Byrne, 1998). All path coefficients are shown in Figure 6: Organizational justice was a significant predictor of both perceived justice of the workplace shock and image compatibility. The other path coefficients are similar to those in Figure 5, only smaller in magnitude; however, the relationship between perceived justice and image compatibility was no longer significant with the addition of organizational justice to the model. That is, perceived justice of the shock event did not account for significant variance in image compatibility beyond the variance accounted for by overall organizational justice perceptions.

Supplemental Analyses

Types of Shock Events

Nurses were presented with a list of 14 workplace shocks, compiled from previous research, and asked to identify the workplace event that had most significant impact on how they thought and felt about their job. Because the list of workplace shocks was comprised of fairly general events (e.g., “Conflict with supervisor, coworker, subordinate, or physician,” see Appendix A), participants were also asked to describe the

circumstances surrounding the shock event in a couple of sentences. Review of these responses revealed that shocks described in two categories, “Assigned extra work” and “Had to leave work undone (i.e., heavy workload)” were very similar. In both categories nurses reported events that involved either unmanageable patient caseloads or being assigned extra, administrative duties. Therefore, I combined these responses to form a new category, “Heavy workload.” Thus, analyses of the workplace shock events are based on 13 event categories plus the “Other” category (e.g., hours and/or pay was decreased, encounters with union organizations in the hospital; see Table 11).

The top five shock events reported are presented in Table 12. In order, these events included: (1) “Conflict with supervisor, coworker, subordinate, or physician” ($n = 42$); (2) “Dealt with difficult, demanding patient or patient’s relative(s)/visitor(s)” ($n = 24$); (3) “Heavy workload” ($n = 24$); (4) “Change in organization or unit policy, protocol, or management” ($n = 16$); and (5) “Training was not provided or adequate” ($n = 15$). The least reported shocks included: “Work interrupted by others” ($n = 2$); “Did not receive promotion or pay raise” ($n = 5$); and, “Received a negative performance evaluation” ($n = 7$).

One-way ANOVAs and post-hoc tests were conducted to determine if the top five reported shock events differed in severity, occurrence, organization-response satisfaction, and perceived justice. These five shock events differed in the extent to which they were upsetting, $F(4, 116) = 6.06, p < .01$. More specifically, the post-hoc test revealed only one significant difference in perceived severity: Dealing with a difficult patient or patient’s visitor was significantly less upsetting than the other four most commonly reported shocks. The five most reported shock events also differed in how frequently they

Table 11. Mean ratings for shock evaluation by shock event.

<i>Shock Event</i>	<i>Shock Severity</i>		<i>Shock Occurrence</i>		<i>Organization Response</i>		<i>Perceived Justice</i>	
1. No promotion or pay raise.	3.40	(1.04)	2.60	(1.02)	2.40	(0.64)	4.68	(0.55)
2. Training not provided or adequate.	3.80	(1.19)	2.93	(0.78)	2.69	(0.92)	4.59	(1.14)
3. Negative performance evaluation.	3.14	(0.50)	2.21	(0.99)	2.76	(1.01)	3.71	(1.41)
4. Organizational or unit change implemented.	4.33	(0.70)	2.63	(0.87)	2.63	(0.94)	4.16	(1.25)
5. Conflict with someone at work.	3.71	(0.99)	2.69	(1.10)	2.61	(1.15)	3.60	(1.45)
6. Someone criticized my nursing care.	3.26	(1.11)	2.44	(0.88)	2.41	(1.40)	3.83	(0.99)
7. Coworker did not complete assigned task.	3.78	(1.07)	3.46	(0.97)	2.76	(1.02)	4.05	(1.25)
8. Dealt with difficult patient/patient relative.	2.88	(0.82)	2.96	(0.93)	3.39	(1.00)	4.85	(1.09)
9. Someone not available when needed.	3.54	(0.71)	3.25	(1.07)	2.96	(0.81)	4.75	(0.93)
10. Heavy workload.	3.71	(1.04)	3.73	(0.98)	2.83	(0.97)	4.64	(1.20)
11. Lacked resources needed to do task.	4.14	(0.85)	3.57	(0.67)	2.67	(0.84)	4.28	(0.85)
12. Work interrupted by others.	3.17	(0.71)	3.75	(1.06)	2.67	(0.94)	4.44	(0.44)
13. Denied request for time-off/schedule change.	3.63	(1.03)	2.56	(0.46)	3.11	(0.82)	4.15	(1.55)
14. Other event.	3.89	(0.87)	2.63	(1.09)	1.93	(1.06)	3.66	(1.24)

Note. Ratings were made on a 5-point scale, except for perceived justice which was rated on a 7-point scale; $N = 204$.

Table 12. Top five shock events reported.

Note. Means that do not share subscripts significantly differ, $p < .05$; $N = 204$.

Top 5 Shock Events Reported	Circumstances Reported regarding the Shock Events	Mean Ratings for Shock Evaluation			
		Shock Severity	Shock Occurrence	Organization Response Satisfaction	Perceived Justice
Conflict with supervisor, coworker, subordinate, or physician. ($n = 42$)	Unsupportive supervisors; coworkers who loaf, undermine other nurses, or gossip; unprofessional physicians.	3.71 _b	2.69 _a	2.61 _a	3.60 _a
Dealt with difficult, demanding patient or patient's relative(s)/ visitor(s). ($n = 24$)	Verbally abusive patients; needy, demanding patients and patient families.	2.88 _a	2.96 _a	3.39 _a	4.85 _b
Heavy workload. ($n = 24$)	Patient load is too heavy (patient to nurse ratio is too high); assigned extra, administrative duties.	3.71 _b	3.73 _b	2.83 _a	4.64 _b
Change in organization or unit policy, protocol, or management. ($n = 16$)	Changes made without nurses' input, often creating more work for nurses, and without explanation of purpose or goal.	4.33 _b	2.63 _a	2.63 _a	4.16 _{ab}
Training was not provided or not adequate. ($n = 15$)	Requests for training ignored; "thrown in" without sufficient training; training sessions conflict with work shifts.	3.80 _b	2.93 _a	2.69 _a	4.59 _b

occurred, $F(4, 116) = 4.97, p < .01$. In particular, heavy workload occurred significantly more frequently than the other four shock events (i.e., the rate of occurrence of the other events did not significantly differ). Satisfaction with the organization's shock response did not differ significantly across the five most common shocks.

The top five shocks reported did significantly differ in terms of perceived justice, $F(4, 116) = 4.90, p < .01$. The post-hoc test showed that a conflict with another employee (e.g., supervisor, coworker, subordinate, or physician) was perceived as significantly less just (i.e., more unfair) than training not being provided, a heavy workload, and dealing with a difficult patient or patient's relative. I suspected that conflict with another employee may have been perceived as the most unfair shock overall because it was rated significantly lower in interpersonal justice (i.e., being treated with respect and in a polite manner) compared to the other shocks. In fact, conflict with another employee had the lowest mean ratings, compared to the other four top reported shocks, for all four perceived justice facets (i.e., interpersonal, informational, procedural, and distributive justice). However, the perceived justice of conflict with another employee was only significantly different from the other shock events in terms of distributive justice (i.e., the extent to which the event or outcome was appropriate or justified given the nurse's behavior and/or company circumstances). Specifically, in terms of distributive justice, conflict with another employee was significantly more unfair than a heavy workload and dealing with a difficult patient or patient's relative. Perhaps, nurses expect or accept a heavy workload and caring for difficult patients as part of their job duties but do not expect conflicts with their coworkers, supervisors, and physicians.

Types of Organization Responses

Previous research has not explored how an organization deals with shock events. Therefore, nurses described the actions that their organization and/or supervisor took in response to the event. A research assistant and I discussed and identified common themes among the 203 reported responses and then coded each open-ended response as one of the following types: (1) organization took action, perceived as positive response ($n = 51$; e.g., supervisor was supportive of the nurse's behavior or concern; nurse had opportunity to discuss shock event with human resources or hospital management); (2) organization took action, perceived as negative response ($n = 20$; e.g. nurse was punished; action or decision that created unpleasant tension in the unit); (3) organization took action that had no discernable effect ($n = 14$; e.g., "lip service," an apology or acknowledgement regarding the shock event, but change or conditions to prevent the event from recurring have not been implemented); (4) shock event was reported, but organization did not take action ($n = 69$); (5) shock event was not reported, employee took action ($n = 32$; e.g., nurse accepted the situation and did not report it; nurse felt she did not need assistance and handled the situation herself). Seventeen of the responses were not classified.

I examined whether satisfaction with the organization's response depended on how the organization responded. A one-way ANOVA indicated that the different kinds of responses differed significantly in the extent to which they were satisfactory, $F(4, 189) = 31.38, p < .01$. A post-hoc test was conducted to determine what types of response were more satisfactory (see Table 13). Not surprisingly, negative organization-responses, which included being told "deal with it" and being reprimanded or suspended, were significantly less satisfactory than the other four types of responses. Incidents in which

the organization did not take action or took some action but it was not seen as effective were perceived as more satisfactory, but not as satisfactory as incidents in which the nurse did not report the shock and took action to resolve the matter or the organization took positive action. Nurses were equally satisfied when their supervisors supported them and when they were able to handle the situation without involving their supervisor or others in the organization.

Table 13. Types of shock response with associated satisfaction rating.
Note. Means that do not share subscripts significantly differ, $p < .05$; $N = 203$.

Type of Shock Response	Examples of Organization's Shock Response	Mean Satisfaction
Organization took action, perceived as positive. ($n = 53$)	Employer was very up-front and communicative during the entire process; employer provided nurse an opportunity to give input; employer listened and took supportive action.	3.53 _c (0.93)
Organization took action, perceived as negative. ($n = 19$)	Verbal warning; nurse reprimanded for action or behavior; incident was officially written up and added to employee's file; other serious punishment (e.g., suspension without pay).	1.58 _a (0.63)
Organization took action, no effect. ($n = 15$)	Told "wait and see" (e.g., if the budget is increased, then new equipment will be ordered) or superficial support (e.g., apology but no action).	2.29 _b (0.75)
Shock reported, but organization did not take action. ($n = 67$)	For example, additional training classes were not added; meeting regarding the issue was promised but never scheduled; management "sweeps it [the issue] under the rug."	2.34 _b (0.84)
Shock not reported, nurse dealt with shock situation. ($n = 31$)	No need to report shock, just follow relevant protocol, ignore and keep working, or avoid situation in the future, etc.	3.09 _c (0.84)

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION

The goal of this study was to advance the unfolding model of voluntary turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 1994), particularly understanding of workplace shocks (i.e., work events that initiate thoughts of leaving the organization) and how these events are related to turnover intention. Previous research has only asked voluntary leavers if a shock prompted their decision to leave the organization and to describe the shock event. In this study, current employees described a negative workplace event and how the organization responded to the event. The extent to which the shock event was upsetting, as well as how the organization handled the event, was expected to affect whether employees perceived the event as just or unjust. Perceived justice of the workplace shock, in turn, was expected to influence image compatibility, work withdrawal, and ultimately turnover intention. The effects of personality traits and job embeddedness on shock evaluation, job attitudes, and withdrawal behavior and intention to leave the organization were also explored.

Summary of Findings

Three personality traits—agreeableness, conscientiousness, and emotional stability—were significant predictors of job attitudes, withdrawal behavior, and turnover intention. Nurses with high levels of agreeableness and conscientiousness reported greater job embeddedness: Specifically, these traits were positively associated with closeness with coworkers and feeling that the organization was a good match for his or her skills and talents. Nurses who have higher levels of agreeableness, conscientiousness, and emotional stability also reported higher levels of job satisfaction, greater

compatibility with the organization, performing fewer withdrawal behaviors (e.g., attending to personal matters at work, failing to attend meetings), and less intention of leaving the organization. These significant correlations suggest that more agreeable, conscientious, and emotionally stable nurses may be best able to deal with upsetting, stressful work events and thus best suited for practicing nursing in hospital settings. Many of the shock events involved interpersonal conflicts (e.g., conflict with someone at work; coworker did not complete her job duties). Agreeable individuals tend to be more interested and considerate of others' feelings and more concerned about making others feel at ease; therefore, nurses with high levels of agreeableness may have been less troubled by interpersonal shocks. More broadly, emotionally stable individuals are inclined to not worry about things or get upset easily. Thus, emotional stability may act as a shock absorber of sorts for all kinds of workplace events; nurses high in this trait are not easily irritated or stressed out by negative workplace events. Lastly, conscientiousness has been shown to moderate the effects of negative work events, whereby individuals who have low levels of conscientiousness react to negative events with less organizational loyalty and greater turnover intention (Orvis et al., 2008). Thus, conscientiousness may also act as a buffer to workplace shocks. To my knowledge, this is the first study to examine the role of individual differences, such as personality traits, in the unfolding model of voluntary turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 1994; Lee et al., 1996).

Higher job satisfaction was also associated greater job embeddedness, greater organizational justice (i.e., perceptions that the organization treats employees fairly), greater image compatibility, and less intention of leaving the organization. Controlling for job satisfaction, job embeddedness and overall organization justice

remained important predictors of intent to leave the organization. Nurses who reported feeling more embedded in the organization, as well as those who felt the organization can be counted on to be fair, had significantly less intention of leaving their organization.

On the whole, the hypotheses were mostly supported. There is some evidence that negative workplace events influence employees' turnover intention. Perceived fairness of the shock experience was positively related to image compatibility: Nurses who reported that the shock experience, though negative, was not particularly unfair or unjust reported their values, goals, and plans as being more compatible with those of the organization compared to nurses who felt the shock was unfair and unjust. I proposed that the relationship between perceived justice and image compatibility depended on the nurse's level of job embeddedness: Presumably, highly embedded nurses were less affected, in terms of image compatibility, by an unjust shock experience than were less embedded nurses. That is, highly embedded nurses' feelings of being connected to and fitting well with the organization buffered the negative effects of the shock event. However, the proposed interaction effect was not significant.

Job embeddedness refers to an accumulation of resources or reasons why an individual stays with an organization; as such, job embeddedness was presumed to be a fairly stable predictor of other job attitudes and turnover intention. Accordingly, I hypothesized that job embeddedness (as a more stable predictor) would moderate the relationship between perceived justice of the shock (presumed to be a shorter-lived perception) and image compatibility. In this study, however, the size of the relationship between job embeddedness and image compatibility was large whereas the relationship between perceived justice and image compatibility was of small to medium size (Cohen,

1988). I had expected a strong, positive relationship between perceived justice and image compatibility, whereby high perceived justice of the shock would be related to high image compatibility even for employees with low job embeddedness (i.e., a significant interaction effect; see Figure 4). However, the main effect of job embeddedness on image compatibility was stronger than the main effect of perceived justice on image compatibility. In effect, highly embedded employees perceived their values, goals, and plans as extremely compatible with organization to the extent that the perceived justice of the shock had little effect on image compatibility. Alternatively, employees with little job embeddedness also perceived very little compatibility between their images and the organization and the perceived fairness or unfairness of the shock event did not considerably alter image compatibility.

In this study, image compatibility appeared to be an important component of the turnover decision process. A sense of compatibility, or fitting, with the organization was associated with significantly less intention of leaving the organization. This finding supports image theory (Beach & Mitchell, 1998), the decision-making theory from which image compatibility originated. That is, nurses who felt their values, goals, or plans were not very compatible with their current organization were more likely to report greater intention of leaving their hospital within the next year.

Additionally, this study suggests that the extent to which employees feel embedded in the organization is critical. Job embeddedness was a significant predictor of both image compatibility and turnover intention, indicating that fit with one's job and organization and feelings of closeness to others at work are valuable. Thus, as previous

research has shown (e.g., Holtom & Inderrieden, 2006; Mitchell et al., 2001), this study suggests that job embeddedness is essential for employee retention.

Contributions

The purpose of this research was to expand the unfolding model of voluntary turnover (particularly the most frequently reported path; Path 3, see Figure 2) by exploring how employees evaluate negative workplace events and the effects of such an experience on turnover intention. This study assessed shock experiences of current employees whereas previous unfolding model research has been conducted solely with voluntary leavers. In previous research voluntary leavers indicated whether the shock (i.e., event that initiated thoughts of leaving the organization) was a personal or work-related event and whether it was a positive or negative experience. The focus of this study was negative, workplace events because such events were most commonly reported (e.g., Lee et al., 1999; Morrell et al., 2004) and because organizations may be able to avoid or resolve such events (whereas an organization presumably could not prevent or address personal shocks). Participants identified the workplace event (i.e., shock) that had most significantly affected how they felt or thought about their job and to evaluate the event on a number of dimensions. Analyses revealed that individuals differentiate between the frequency and the severity (i.e., how upsetting the event was) of the event. Moreover, workplace events that were rated as the most severe (or upsetting) were those that were perceived to be the responsibility of the organization and those that affected others at work to a greater extent.

This research also shows that considering negative workplace events employees reflect on how their employer responded to the shock event. Participants described how

their organization or supervisor handled the shock event and reported how satisfied they were with that response. In this study, nurses were most satisfied when their employer took supportive action, for example, listening to the nurse's concern and following-up with proactive action (e.g., securing extra staff; ordering needed supplies; relaying the concern to the appropriate person or department) or even simply supporting the nurse's behavior. Interestingly, shock severity and organization-response satisfaction were negatively related: On average, the more upsetting the shock event, the less satisfied the nurse was with the organization's event response.

Additionally, participants evaluated how the fairness of the shock experience (i.e., the actual shock event and the organization's shock event response). Although both shock severity and organization-response satisfaction were significantly correlated with perceived justice of the shock, the path analysis revealed that only satisfaction with the organization's shock response significantly predicted perceived justice. That is, some of the most upsetting events may not have been perceived as the worst events, in terms of being unfair, to the extent that employers handled events in a manner that satisfied nurses. Because organization-response satisfaction was positively related to perceived justice, it seems reasonable to suggest that satisfactory responses typically involved an explanation of the event circumstances, an opportunity for the nurse to express her opinion (i.e., procedural justice) or were merely handled politely (i.e., interpersonal justice). For example, several nurses reported changes in the organization's policy as their most significant workplace shock. Some organizations implemented such changes in a satisfying or fair manner; for instance, "...we were treated so well and the communication from the top down was ongoing and positive, it was as smooth as it could

be. I am very proud of the way our organization handled this.” Other shock events were handled poorly and consequently perceived as being unjust and unfair; for instance, “Changes [are] passed down but policies never catch up. New policies [are] implemented without nurses’ input and/or take time away from patient care.” Moreover, this study suggests that how the organization handles a negative workplace event is important because it may determine whether shock experiences result in turnover intentions, which are the primary determinant of turnover decisions.

This study expanded the unfolding model of voluntary turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 1994; Lee et al., 1996) by assessing how the shock experience is evaluated and integrated justice perceptions into the turnover decision process. In addition to the perceived fairness of the shock experience, nurses’ overall organizational justice perceptions (i.e., the extent to which the organization is perceived as treating employees fairly) was examined. If perceptions of overall organizational justice are accounted for, then perceived justice of the (single) shock event no longer predicts image compatibility. This finding is perhaps not surprising. Perceived justice was assessed regarding only the shock experience reported in this study, whereas overall organizational justice is presumably based on all, or at least numerous, positive and negative work events and may include not only events directly experienced by the employee but also ones of his or her coworkers. Therefore, it is quite logical that organizational justice, the extent to which the organization is perceived as treating employees fairly in general, is a better predictor of image compatibility. That is, perceptions of how compatible one’s values, goals, and plans are with the organization seem to be more closely related to one’s whole experience with an organization rather than a single event. Similarly, job embeddedness arguably

reflects overall experience with an organization and is also a significant predictor of image compatibility. Another contribution of this study is evidence the accumulation of workplace experiences (represented by job satisfaction, job embeddedness, and organizational justice) has a greater influence on image compatibility and ultimately turnover intention than a single shocking event.

Study Limitations

One limitation of this study is that most of the data were self-report. Thus, there is some concern that participants gave socially desirable responses, particularly on more sensitive measures such as the work withdrawal measure. To address this limitation, coworkers of the participants evaluated the participants' ability to handle job stress, commitment to nursing, and overall job performance. Although work withdrawal was not predicted by perceived justice, as hypothesized, coworkers' were well-aware of nurses who performed withdrawal behaviors (e.g., attending to personal matters at work, postponing completing job duties) as they rated them as being significantly less committed to the nursing unit. That is, nurses' self-reported work withdrawal behavior was significantly correlated with coworkers' ratings of their commitment to the nursing unit. Additionally, coworkers' perceptions of nurses' ability to effectively cope with workplace stress was significantly correlated with nurses' (self-report) image compatibility and turnover intention. In other words, coworkers' assessment of how well nurses handled workplace stress was related to nurses' feelings of being well-suited to their current organization as well as intentions of leaving the organization. The significant correlations with data provided by the coworkers support the validity of nurses' self-report data.

A more significant limitation of the study is its cross-sectional design. With the exception of the co-worker surveys, data was collected at one point in time and was retrospective (i.e., based on memory of past events). Participants identified the single event that had most significantly affected how they felt or thought about their job. In retrospect, it may have been informative to assess when the event occurred (e.g., did the event occur within the past month or years ago?) as the timing of the event may affect how it was perceived at present or the extent to which it is related to (i.e., predictive of) image compatibility and turnover intention. Moreover, the notion of the unfolding model of voluntary turnover is that the decision to leave the organization *unfolds* over time, and this study did not capture the longitudinal nature of the turnover decision process. However, the cross-sectional, retrospective design of this study was similar to previous research on the unfolding model of voluntary turnover (e.g., Lee & Mitchell, 1994; Lee et al., 1999; Morrell et al., 2008), which examined shock experiences of voluntary leavers (i.e., individuals who had left the organization). Although the present study did not explore the longitudinal nature of the unfolding model, it does advance the unfolding model by assessing shock experiences among current employees.

Also, similar to previous research on the unfolding model, this study was designed to assess just one shock event. Although participants were instructed to consider the single, most significant workplace event, there is not complete certainty their responses reflect just one type of shock event (e.g., heavy workload; someone criticizing my nursing care). It is possible that the *single* event reported may have represented lots of other workplace events; thus, it is possible that the results of this study may be more appropriately interpreted as the effects of many negative workplace experiences rather

than the effects a single workplace shock on intention to turnover. Indeed, job satisfaction, job embeddedness, and organizational justice, which arguably reflect employees' cumulative experiences in the organization, were significantly correlated with image compatibility, which in turn predicted turnover intention. Even though Lee and Mitchell (1994; Lee et al., 1999) argue that a single event initiates thoughts of turnover, it seems unlikely in reality that a sole, single event—barring something horrific or life-changing—leads to a decision to leave. A longitudinal study could have assessed all shocks within given time period to provide a more thorough account of significant workplace events. Because the objective of this study was to extend the unfolding model, focusing on only a single shock experience, as other researchers have, was appropriate. Furthermore, assessing only one shock experience was a cleaner way to explore how employees evaluate workplace shocks (i.e., severity, perceived justice) and to understand how organizations typically respond to shock events and, more importantly, how employees perceive those responses.

Conclusion

This study extended previous employee turnover research, particularly research regarding the unfolding model of voluntary turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 1994), in a number of ways. First, the current study assessed the importance of individual differences and job embeddedness in the evaluation of workplace shocks and the larger turnover decision process. Although personality traits are not related to how shocks are perceived, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and emotional stability are significant predictors of work withdrawal behavior and turnover intention. It is not clear that job embeddedness influences how shocks are perceived, as was predicted, but there is some evidence that it

may buffer the negative effects of workplace shocks: Job embeddedness was associated with greater image compatibility and less turnover intention. Future research should explore what factors, or perhaps experiences in the organization, affect how embedded employees' feel.

Second, this study expanded what had previously been assessed as the shock experience to include not only the shock event but also the shock response (i.e., how the organization responded to the shock event). The organization's shock response was even more important than hypothesized; satisfaction with the organization-response predicted perceived justice of the shock experience, whereas the severity of the shock event did not. These results should be encouraging for hospitals—although shock events are inevitable part of nurses' work experience, the organization can take actions in response to shocks that prevents voluntary turnover. For example, "Heavy workload" is a significant negative work event experienced by many nurses. How the organization, or the nurse's supervisor in particular, handles the event affects how the nurse feels about an excessive patient load or many additional, administrative tasks. A heavy workload was perceived as less unfair when, for instance, "If we have a hard day, we can send a report to our supervisor and they will investigate if we were given fair assignments." On the contrary, a heavy workload was perceived as more unfair when nurses were told, for example, "... if we did not complete the assigned duties we would no longer work for the organization."

Third, the current study integrates perceived justice into the turnover decision process. Employees typically assess the fairness of event (or decision) outcomes and circumstances, and perceived justice affects job attitudes and behavior. Based on the

results of this study, perceived justice, both regarding the specific workplace shock and the organization as whole (i.e., the extent to which the organization treats people fairly), also influences the turnover decision. Specifically perceived justice affects the extent to which employees view their values, goals, and plans as compatible with the organization. This compatibility is referred to as image compatibility (Beach & Mitchell, 1998) and is a significant predictor of turnover intention. Employees who feel that their values, professional goals, and plans to achieve those goals are more aligned with the organization are more likely to stay with the organization. Thus, this study also emphasizes the importance of image compatibility in the turnover decision process. Job embeddedness, organizational justice, and job satisfaction are significantly correlated with image compatibility, and future research could tease apart how these constructs are related as well as other predictors of image compatibility.

This research is an important step toward understanding how employees evaluate workplace shocks and the effects of shock experiences on the turnover decision process, particularly image compatibility and intention of leaving the organization. It is also hoped that this research may be informative in developing prescriptions for organizational responses that could prevent costly, *avoidable* voluntary employee turnover.

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Appendix A

Study Questionnaire

Demographic and Employment Questions:**1. Gender (check one)**

- ☐ Male
☐ Female

2. Age _____**3. Race/Ethnicity (check one)**

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian/Pacific Islander | <input type="checkbox"/> Native/American Indian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> African American/Black | <input type="checkbox"/> White/Anglo (non-Hispanic) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic/Latino | <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please describe |
- _____

4. What is the highest level of education you have completed? (check one)

- ☐ High School Diploma or GED
☐ 2 years of college/AA degree/technical school training
☐ College (BSN or BS)
☐ Master's degree, please describe: _____
☐ Doctorate, please describe: _____

5. How long have you been a Registered Nurse? _____ yrs. _____ mos.**6. Current Employer: _____**

- a. How long have you been employed by your this organization? _____ yrs.
 _____ mos.
 b. Have you received any promotions (or pay raises) since being employed
 by this organization? Yes or No If Yes, how many? _____

7. Job Title: _____

- a. How long have you held your current job? _____ yrs. _____ mos.

8. Specialty Area (check one):

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Labor & Delivery | <input type="checkbox"/> Operating Room |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Postpartum/Newborn Nursery | <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Care |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Intensive Care | <input type="checkbox"/> Pediatrics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medical/Surgical | <input type="checkbox"/> Oncology Services |

9. Typical Shift:

- ☐ Day shift
☐ Night shift
☐ Other

Big 5 Personality Measure

[Goldberg et al., 2006]

Please use the rating scale below to describe how accurately each statement describes *you*. Describe yourself as you generally are now, not as you wish to be in the future. Describe yourself as you honestly see yourself, in relation to other people you know of the same sex as you are, and roughly your same age. Please read each statement carefully, and then fill in the corresponding number in the blank at the right of each statement.

Response Options

- 1: Very Inaccurate
- 2: Moderately Inaccurate
- 3: Neither Inaccurate nor Accurate
- 4: Moderately Accurate
- 5: Very Accurate

1. _____ Am the life of the party.
2. _____ Feel little concern for others.
3. _____ Am always prepared.
4. _____ Get stressed out easily.
5. _____ Have a rich vocabulary.
6. _____ Don't talk a lot.
7. _____ Am interested in people.
8. _____ Leave my belongings around.
9. _____ Am relaxed most of the time.
10. _____ Have difficulty understanding abstract ideas.
11. _____ Feel comfortable around people.
12. _____ Insult people.
13. _____ Pay attention to details.
14. _____ Worry about things.
15. _____ Have a vivid imagination.
16. _____ Keep in the background.
17. _____ Sympathize with others' feelings.
18. _____ Make a mess of things.
19. _____ Seldom feel blue.
20. _____ Am not interested in abstract ideas.
21. _____ Start conversations.
22. _____ Am not interested in other people's problems.
23. _____ Get chores done right away.
24. _____ Am easily disturbed.
25. _____ Have excellent ideas.
26. _____ Have little to say.
27. _____ Have a soft heart.

28. _____ Often forget to put things back in their proper place.
29. _____ Get upset easily.
30. _____ Do not have a good imagination.
31. _____ Talk to a lot of different people at parties.
32. _____ Am not really interested in others.
33. _____ Like order.
34. _____ Change my mood a lot.
35. _____ Am quick to understand things.
36. _____ Don't like to draw attention to myself.
37. _____ Take time out for others.
38. _____ Shirk my duties.
39. _____ Have frequent mood swings.
40. _____ Use difficult words.
41. _____ Don't mind being the center of attention.
42. _____ Feel others' emotions.
43. _____ Follow a schedule.
44. _____ Get irritated easily.
45. _____ Spend time reflecting on things.
46. _____ Am quiet around strangers.
47. _____ Make people feel at ease.
48. _____ Am exacting in my work.
49. _____ Often feel blue.
50. _____ Am full of ideas.

Job Satisfaction:

[Mitchell et al., 2001]

Please rate the extent to which you agree/disagree with the following statements, having experienced these specific work events. Use the scale below:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neither			Strongly Agree

1. All in all, I am satisfied with my job.
2. In general, I don't like my job. (*reverse-scored*)
3. In general, I like working at my organization.

Job Embeddedness (organizational/"on-the-job" embeddedness):

[Felps et al., 2009]

Think about your job and your employer and rate the extent to which you agree/disagree with the following statements, according to this scale:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neither			Strongly Agree

1. My job utilizes my skills and talents well.

2. I feel like I am a good match for my organization.
3. If I stay with my organization, I will be able to achieve most of my goals.
4. I have a lot of freedom on this job to pursue my goals.
5. I would sacrifice a lot if I left this job.
6. I believe the prospects for continuing employment with my organization are excellent.
7. I am a member of an effective work group.
8. I work closely with my coworkers.
9. On the job, I interact frequently with my work group members.

Overall Organizational Justice:

[Ambrose & Schminke, 2009]

Think about your current employer and please rate the extent to which you agree/disagree with the following statements. Use the scale below:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neither			Strongly Agree

1. Overall, I'm treated fairly by my organization.
2. Usually, the ways things work in my organization are not fair. (reverse scored)
3. In general, I can count on my organization to be fair.
4. In general, the treatment I receive at work is fair.
5. For the most part, my organization treats its employees fairly.
6. Most of the people who work with me would say they are often treated unfairly. (reverse scored)

Assessment of Shock Event and Organization Response:

We are interested in your experiences at work. Because this is a study of workplace stress and stress management in nursing, we are particularly interested in negative workplace events that might be stressful and lead to job burnout.

Below is a list of commonly reported negative workplace events and experiences. Please indicate which single event has most significantly affected how you feel or think about your job. If another event (i.e., one not listed below) had the most significant impact on your feelings and thoughts about your job, please select "Other" and write in the event.

1. Did not receive promotion or pay raise.
2. Training was not provided or not adequate.
3. Received a negative performance evaluation.
4. Change in organizational or unit policy (or protocol) implemented.
5. Conflict with supervisor, coworker, subordinate, or physician.
6. Physician, supervisor, coworker, or patient/patient's relative criticized my nursing care.
7. Coworker or subordinate did not complete assigned tasks.

8. Dealt with difficult, demanding patient or patient's relative(s)/visitor(s).
9. Physician, supervisor, or coworker was not available when needed.
10. Had to leave work undone (i.e., heavy workload).
11. Assigned extra work.
12. Lacked resources needed to do a task.
13. Work interrupted by others.
14. Denied request for time-off or shift/schedule change.
15. Other, please describe this event: [open-text box for participant's response]

In one or two sentences, please describe the circumstances surrounding this event: [open-text box for participant's response]

The following questions pertain to the event that you have identified as the most negative workplace experience—please think only of this event as you answer the following questions:

How frequently have you experienced this event?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Rarely (Once)	Rarely (A few times)	Occasionally (About once/month)	Frequently (Weekly)	Very Frequently (Almost daily or daily)

Was the event unexpected or expected?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Unexpected				Very Expected

Was the event unavoidable or avoidable?

1	2	3	4	5
Unavoidable				Avoidable

To what extent did the event affect others (e.g., coworkers, patients) at work?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all (Affected only me)		Somewhat (Affected a couple others)		A great deal (Affected entire unit or staff)

To what extent do you believe your employer (i.e., the organization) was responsible for the event?

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all		Somewhat		A great deal

How upsetting was this event?

1	2	3	4	5
Not Very Upsetting		Moderately Upsetting		Extremely Upsetting

When this event happened, how did you respond? That is, how did you handle the event? What specific actions did you take in response to the event?
[Open-ended response; text box for response.]

When this event happened, how did your employer handle the event? That is, what actions did the organization and/or your supervisor take in response to the event?
[Open-ended response; text box for response.]

Was your employer's response unexpected or expected?

1 2 3 4 5
Very Unexpected Very Expected

Do you think your employer could have handled the event better?

1 2 3 4 5
No, response was good Possibly Yes, definitely

How satisfied were you with the organization's response to this event?

1 2 3 4 5
Extremely Dissatisfied Neutral Extremely Satisfied

Perceived Justice (related to shock event and response):

[Items taken from Colquitt (2001) measure and represent all four types of organizational justice: (1) distributive, items 1 and 5; (2) procedural, items 2 and 6; (3) interpersonal, items 3 and 7; and (4) informational, items 4 and 8.]

Thinking of how you felt when you experienced this event, please rate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements, according to the following scale:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Strongly Disagree Neither Strongly Agree

1. The event or outcome of the event was justified, given my behavior and/or company circumstances.
2. Procedures that led to or are related to the event were applied consistently throughout the organization.
3. Others involved in this event treated me with respect.
4. Others involved in this event were candid in their communications regarding the event or event-related procedures.
5. The event or outcome of the event was appropriate, given my behavior and/or company circumstances.
6. I was able to express my opinion regarding procedures related to the event.
7. Others involved in this event acted in a polite manner.
8. Others involved in this event provided reasonable explanations of the event or event-related procedures.

Image Compatibility:

[Based on Lee et al., 1999; ^a new item]

Given your experiences at work, please indicate the extent to which you agree/disagree with the following statements, according to this scale:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strongly Disagree

Neither

Strongly Agree

1. My values are compatible with my organization.
2. The principles and morals of my organization are aligned with my own. ^a
3. My goals are compatible with my organization.
4. At my organization, I think that I will be able to achieve most of my goals.
5. My career plans are compatible with my organization. ^a
6. At my organization, my career is progressing as I hoped.

Work Withdrawal:

[Based on Hanisch, 1991]

Below is a list of behaviors some employees use to deal with workplace stress and negative events. Please report how frequently you have performed each of these behaviors, according to the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Very Often	Always

1. Initiated needed changes in your workplace. (E)
2. Stayed late or worked extra hours. (E)
3. Taken frequent, long, or unauthorized work breaks.
4. Postponed completing job duties.
5. Offered to help a coworker who needed assistance. (E)
6. Attended to personal matters at work.
7. Been late to work.
8. Been absent from work without a good reason (e.g., not sick).
9. Completed work at home after hours. (E)
10. Failed to attend a scheduled meeting.
11. Talked up your organization as a great place to work. (E)
12. Made excuses to get out of work.
13. Left work early without permission.
14. Allowed others do your work for you.
15. Mentored/trained a coworker on a specific procedure or protocol. (E)

Turnover Intention:

[Based on Boswell & Olson-Buchanan, 2004; Hanisch & Hulin, 1990; Lee et al., 1996; Mitchell et al., 2001]

Thinking of your career, where do you see yourself in one year?

[Open-ended response; text box for response.]

Thinking of your career, where do you see yourself in five years?

[Open-ended response; text box for response.]

Please rate the extent to which you agree/disagree with the following statements, according to this scale:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Strongly Disagree Neither Strongly Agree

1. I am currently gathering information about other nursing job options.
2. During the next year, I will probably look for a new job outside my current organization.
3. I am considering quitting this job for an alternative employer.
4. I intend to stay with my organization for at least the next 12 months. (reverse-scored)
5. I am considering changing careers.
6. I am currently gathering information about occupations other than nursing.
7. It is likely that I will stay in the nursing profession for at least the next 12 months. (reverse-scored)
8. I think about quitting this job even without knowing what I will do next.

Best Things about being a registered nurse...

Please list the top three things you like about your current job and/or the profession of nursing:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Coworker Contact:

Lastly, we would like to ask a coworker a few questions about your workplace and your working relationship. This data will be used to validate data provided by you. The data you provided will NOT be shared with your coworker, your employer, or any third party. Likewise, the data your coworker provides will not be shared with you, your employer, or any third party. Your coworker's participation involves completing a very short on-line questionnaire (participation time is expected to take no more than 10 minutes), and he or she may enter a lottery drawing for a \$25 gift card in exchange for participating.

Please provide the name and contact information of two coworkers you worked with on your last shift (or that you work with regularly). We will invite the first coworker listed to participate in this study via email (or by a phone call if the email address is not working/correct). Only if this coworker does not respond, then we will contact the second coworker you listed.

1. Coworker Name: _____
Email Address: _____
Phone number: _____

2. Coworker Name: _____
Email Address: _____
Phone number: _____

Appendix B

Coworker Questionnaire

Demographic and Employment Questions:

1. Gender (check one)

☐ Male
☐ Female

2. Age _____

3. Current Employer: _____

4. Job Title: _____

Evaluation of Workplace (Overall Organizational Justice):

Think about your current organization, please rate the extent to which you agree/disagree with the following statements. Use the scale below:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 Strongly Disagree Neither Strongly Agree

1. Overall, I'm treated fairly by my organization.
2. Usually, the ways things work in my organization are not fair. (reverse scored)
3. In general, I can count on my organization to be fair.
4. In general, the treatment I receive at work is fair.
5. For the most part, my organization treats its employees fairly.
6. Most of the people who work with me would say they are often treated unfairly. (reverse scored)

Evaluation of Coworker:

1. How long have you worked with this coworker? _____ yrs. _____ mos.

2. How often do you work with this coworker?

1 2 3 4 5
 Very Rarely Rarely Occasionally Frequently Very Frequently
 (A few times/year) (Every couple of months) (At least once/month) (Weekly) (Daily or almost daily)

3. How well do you know this coworker?

1 2 3 4 5
 Not very well Very Well

We are interested in your coworker's work-related attitudes and behavior, including his or her ability to deal with stressful workplace events. Thinking of your coworker, please rate him or her according to the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree			Neither			Strongly Agree

1. This nurse often seems stressed out or overwhelmed.
 2. This nurse copes effectively with workplace stress.
 3. This nurse is not a team-player.
 4. This nurse is a responsible employee.
 5. This nurse is not committed to our unit and/or our employer.
 6. This nurse is committed to the profession of nursing.
 7. On a scale of 1 (*Poor*) to 7 (*Excellent*), I rate this nurse's job performance:
- | | | | | | | |
|------|---|---|---------|---|---|-----------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Poor | | | Average | | | Excellent |